

Modern Philology

VOLUME XVI

December 1918

NUMBER 8

LE TRANSCENDANTALISME D'APRÈS L'HISTOIRE

Qu'est-ce que le Transcendentalisme? A cette question un ouvrage récent examiné ici-même¹ faisait la réponse suivante. Le Transcendentalisme est un mouvement essentiellement religieux de sa nature. C'est bien moins une philosophie qu'un nouveau système d'apologétique chrétienne sous l'égide de Victor Cousin. Ce n'est pas Emerson, c'est Channing et Ripley qui sont "l'âme" du Transcendentalisme. Le Transcendentalisme avait trouvé sa forme définitive et originale avant 1835, c'est à dire avant les premiers travaux d'Emerson. C'est à tort que l'on rapporte à Kant un mouvement surtout français dans son origine. Sur ce mouvement Coleridge ni Carlyle n'ont eu d'influence marquée.

Telles sont les thèses que nous voudrions discuter. Nous ne leur opposerons point des raisonnements ni des hypothèses plus ou moins vérifiées par les textes mais une enquête critique dans les périodiques et les ouvrages de controverse de l'époque, enquête dont nous donnons ici les principaux résultats.

LE TRANSCENDANTALISME ET SA DEFINITION

Tout se passe dans les textes nombreux que nous avons examinés comme si le Transcendentalisme était un changement de philosophie, le passage du sensualisme à l'idéalisme qu'Emerson signalait dans

¹ *Du Transcendentalisme considéré essentiellement dans sa définition et ses origines françaises*, par W. Girard. Voir dans *Modern Philology*, September, 1917, le compte-rendu de M. Sherburn.

son essai fameux sur le Transcendantaliste. Le problème religieux et le problème philosophique, il est vrai, sont inséparables dans l'histoire du mouvement, mais, de ces deux éléments, il n'est pas douteux non plus que c'est non la religiosité mais la philosophie qui est nouvelle. La théorie de la divine immanence dont M. Girard fait l'essence du Transcendantalisme est ancienne. On la trouve chez Edwards et les mystiques puritains et autres. Ce n'est pas en tant que religion mais en tant que philosophie que le Transcendantalisme est une innovation. C'est ce que constataient déjà les historiens comme Frothingham dans un passage tronqué par M. Girard.¹

Que, dès le début du 19ème siècle, on sente en Amérique le besoin de donner à la religiosité une base philosophique nouvelle, rien de plus certain. On s'aperçoit, non sans raison, que l'alliance du sentiment religieux avec une philosophie sensualiste de son essence, comme celle de Locke, est contre nature: "Notre religion et notre philosophie sont en guerre," écrit Brownson en 1836. "Tout le monde le sait, nous ne sommes plus religieux qu'aux dépens de la logique."² Cette contradiction doit cesser. Il y a des besoins nouveaux que n'explique ni ne satisfait plus le système de Locke. On demande à une philosophie nouvelle de prouver la religion et cette philosophie qui manque en Amérique on la cherche à l'étranger, en Angleterre, en France, mais surtout en Allemagne.

Sur ces aspirations et besoins nouveaux tout le monde est d'accord mais on va différer sur le choix à faire d'une philosophie; c'est à ce sujet que la controverse s'engage et qu'Unitaires et Transcendantaux sont aux prises.³ Aux besoins nouveaux on oppose "l'aridité et la froideur" de la prédication contemporaine. Cela tient à la théologie du temps "taught to consider mere ratiocination as the grand and almost sole function of the human mind." "A winter reigned in the theology of the land second only to that of the scholastic age." "The system runs counter to nature the heart will throb forth its

¹ Frothingham écrit bien: "Transcendentalism . . . had none but a religious aspect," mais il ajoute—phrase oubliée par M. Girard dans sa citation—"such an inference would be narrow" (*Transcendentalism in New England*, p. 128 et non 53).

² *Christian Examiner*, XXI, 33 ff.

³ "There are certain periods in the history of society, when, passing from a state of spontaneous production to a state of reflection, mankind are particularly disposed to inquire concerning themselves and their destination, the nature of their being, the evidence of their knowledge, and the grounds of their faith." C'est ce qui se passe actuellement en Allemagne et qui se voit dans l'œuvre de Kant (*Ch. Exam.*, XIV [1833], 120).

innate tendency, and conscience will assert its prerogative." Voilà pourquoi on va à la philosophie française et allemande.¹

Si les Transcendantaux sont d'instinct des novateurs, leurs adversaires restent des gens d'autorité et de froide raison. De là des résistances et des controverses au cours desquelles les points de vue réciproques vont de plus en plus diverger, au point d'en devenir contradictoires. Le Transcendentalisme va naître de ce conflit. Forme et fond les adversaires vont le déclarer inacceptable. Qu'il s'agisse de "la formidable terminologie de Kant" ou des "grâces de Platon" on ne voit dans l'idéalisme nouveau qu' "un tissu d'absurdités," "a mass of palpable absurdities."² On n'a pas assez de mots pour exprimer son indignation envers ce "charlatanisme," "which tampers with religious belief and immortal interests, in order to gild and complete a fantastic system of man's device."³ C'étaient les poètes qui élaboraient la religion des anciens. Ce sont les philosophes qui prétendent établir celle des modernes. On ne leur reconnaît pas ce droit: "Philosophy is not the master nor the author of religion, but its servant. It may interpret oracles, but it utters none."⁴

On tourne en ridicule "the poetical school of philosophy," "illud alterum genus philosophiae phantasticum, et tumidum, et quasi poeticum, magis blanditum intellectui." Tout ce qui est métaphysique, mystique et poésie est déclaré a priori obscur et inintelligible.⁵ Tel est le verdict que l'on applique indistinctement à Kant,

¹ *Two Articles of the Princeton Review, concerning the transcendental philosophy*, pp. 6-8.

La même constatation fait l'objet du chapitre I du livre de John Murdock, *Sketches of Modern Philosophy* (1842), où Murdock ramène très justement l'histoire du Transcendentalisme au conflit entre l'entendement au sens de Locke et la raison au sens de Cousin et de Kant.—"Your philosophy has so benumbed your spiritual nature, that you can not even talk upon this subject" ("A Plain Discussion with a Transcendentalist," *New Englander*, I (1843), 506). Tout ce dialogue entre un Transcendantaliste et son adversaire est à lire. Le Transcendantaliste y soutient ce point de vue que: "the understanding is not adapted to the discovery of truth in things spiritual." Même idée dans une contribution fort intéressante: *An Essay on Transcendentalism* (Boston: Crocker and Ruggles, 1842, p. 27)—"It is based on principles which show our old philosophy to be false and hollow." "A religious community has reason to look with distrust and dread on a philosophy which limits the ideas of the human mind to the informations of the senses and denies the existence of spiritual elements in the nature of man." D'où nécessité d'accorder la religion avec une philosophie nouvelle, telle qu'on la trouve en Angleterre, en Allemagne et en France (*Dial*, I, 259-60).

² *North Am. Rev.* (July, 1829), *pass.* et pp. 110, 111, 116.

³ *Ch. Exam.*, XXIV, 327-28.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*, XIV, 117: "Whatever is *supersensual* and cannot be made plain by images addressed to the senses is denounced as obscure, or beckoned away as mystical and extravagant. Whatever lies beyond the limits of ordinary and outward experience is regarded as the ancient geographers regarded the greater portion of the globe—as a land of shadows and chimaeras."

Swedenborg, Cousin, Coleridge, Carlyle et Emerson. Le pli est pris: Transcendantalisme est désormais synonyme d'inintelligible, absurde et obscur, autrement dit métaphysique, mystique, poétique et allemand. Il est entendu que "precise and correct thoughts commonly clothe themselves in simple, accurate, and intelligible language."¹ On soutient que le domaine de l'expérience est seul celui de la philosophie, qu'il y a des problèmes que la raison humaine n'a pas qualité pour résoudre et qui sont du ressort exclusif de la religion.² On ne sort pas de là. Les Transcendantaux auront bien de la peine à se défaire de ce reproche. Ils auront beau montrer que la philosophie et la religion sont parfaitement compatibles, que poétique et mystique ne sont pas nécessairement synonymes d'obscur. Ils ne seront pas suivis. La lutte est désormais engagée entre "sensualistes" et "supernaturalistes," entre "empiristes" et "métaphysiciens," disciples de Locke et de Bacon d'une part et partisans de l'idéalisme allemand ou français de l'autre. Deux écoles philosophiques sont désormais en présence et les positions qu'elles défendent sont déclarées antithétiques. Ce sont deux états d'esprit différents et contradictoires, l'un est lockien, l'autre transcendental. D'un camp à l'autre on ne parle pas la même langue.³

DATE D'APPARITION DU TRANSCENDANTALISME

Le Transcendantalisme est un idéalisme nouveau qui devient de notoriété publique vers 1836.⁴ C'est ce dont témoignent les documents dont nous faisons usage:⁵

¹ *North Am. Rev.* (July, 1829), *pass.* et p. 111.

² *Ch. Exam.*, XXIII, 194: "There are mysteries in nature, which human power cannot penetrate; there are problems which the philosopher cannot solve." Voir tout cet article qui nous donne du Transcendantalisme un signalement fort complet.

³ *Ch. Exam.*, XXIV, 322-23: "We find no other distinction so broad and obvious, as the one . . . between the writings of Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, and Cousin on the one side, and those of Locke, Reid, and their followers on the other." *Ibid.*, XXIII, 174 ff.: "Certainly it is that a revolution in taste and opinion is going on among our literary men, and that philosophical writing is assuming a phasis entirely new. . . . The difference between the old and new schools is radical." Le Transcendantalisme est une philosophie nouvelle, "new in the facts with which it starts, new in the course of inquiry, in the end which it proposes, in matter, method, and results." *An Essay on Transcendentalism*, p. 20. Cf. également Murdock, *op. cit.*, chap. I.

⁴ Rappelons que c'est en 1835 qu'Emerson confie à Carlyle le projet d'une revue, "The Transcendentalist," première idée du *Dial*.—*Carlyle-Emerson Correspondence*, I, 48. Les premières réunions du "Transcendental Club" sont de septembre 1836.

⁵ Les italiques sont nôtres.

"Within a short period of time a new school of philosophy has appeared."—*Ch. Exam.*, XXI (January, 1837), 377. (Compte-rendu de *Nature* d'Emerson.)

"Transcendentalism as it is beginning to be manifested among ourselves."—*Ibid.*, XXI (May, 1837), 187.

"Certainly it is that a revolution . . . is going on among our literary men."—*Ibid.*, XXIII (November 1837).

"This timid procedure [la méthode de Locke] has become unpopular of late. A new set of philosophers has arisen."—*Ibid.*, XXIV (March, 1838), 322.

"We would call a public attention to this address as the first fruits of transcendentalism in our country."—Norton: *Transcendentalism*, p. 69. (L'adresse en question est la *Divinity School Address* d'Emerson. Juillet 1838.)

"It has for some time been pretty generally admitted . . . that there is in the midst of us . . . a monster. . . . To this was given the—as the thing was new—new name, Transcendentalism."—*An Essay on Transcendentalism* (1842), pp. 7-8.

"Transcendentalism is now the chosen current epithet."—*Dial*, III (January, 1843), 407.

LE TRANSCENDANTALISME ET SON REPRÉSENTANT

Qu'Emerson soit au moment où paraissent les documents ci-dessus et, de leur propre aveu, considéré par ses contemporains comme le représentant typique et l'on peut dire officiel du mouvement, nul doute. Entre 1836 et 1840, au moment où le Transcendentalisme s'impose à l'attention publique comme un mouvement philosophique nouveau et où l'on commence à l'attaquer comme tel, c'est bien Emerson qui le représente. C'est à propos de *Nature*, des premières conférences de Boston, et du fameux discours devant la faculté de théologie de Cambridge que la controverse transcendentaliste bat son plein. C'est Emerson qui fournit aux adversaires la première occasion de définir le mouvement. Nommément ou non, c'est bien lui que l'on prend pour le Transcendentaliste typique et, à en croire ses adversaires, le Transcendentaliste unique. En quoi faisant les adversaires sentent très bien d'ailleurs que la tactique est dangereuse. On craint, en désignant Emerson comme le chef du mouvement, de lui faire, comme nous disons aujourd'hui, une réclame et de le désigner ainsi à l'attention de disciples éventuels. C'est pourquoi, sans souci des contradictions, on voit tantôt en Emerson le Transcendentaliste

par excellence, un maître entouré de partisans, tantôt au contraire un isolé qui ne saurait faire école et qui séduit les jeunes gens par le caractère brillant et poétique de sa rhétorique. Mais enfin Emerson fait parler de lui et on l'écoute. On a beau faire des réserves là-dessus pour rassurer le public. On ne voit pas moins dans Emerson le *leader* des Transcendantaux.

Telle est l'attitude adoptée, entre autres, par le *Christian Examiner* pour atténuer les craintes de Norton au sujet du Discours de Cambridge:¹

We know of but one single individual whom the public has any sufficient ground for regarding as a believer of it. From the published writings of Mr. Emerson, quoted by the reviewers, and their accordance with the language quoted from the German philosophers, it may with great apparent certainty be inferred that he is of their school; and beside him there are a few others, who, if not to be termed followers, yet hold generally with him.

Mais de ce que l'on admire Emerson comme conférencier il ne faut pas en conclure qu'on lui reconnaissse une autorité quelconque en philosophie ou en religion, ajoute-t-on. Quel est celui de ses auditeurs qui pourrait dire, au sortir de ses conférences, si Emerson est "théiste, panthéiste, ou athée"? Emerson est un brillant orateur, un poète mais il n'a pas de système: "Those lectures were brilliant flights of the imagination, beautiful streams of poetry . . . but they are not clear expositions of doctrine, or systematic statements of opinion." Emerson est un disciple des Allemands, il est plus poète que philosophe et voilà pourquoi il est transcendental.²

LE TRANSCENDANTALISME ET L'IDÉALISME ALLEMAND

Sur les rapports étroits qui existent entre le Transcendentalisme américain et l'idéalisme allemand l'unanimité est non moins complète.³ Des deux philosophies en présence l'une est anglaise et

¹ *Ch. Exam.*, XXVIII, 388 ff.

² On connaît le verdict de J. Q. Adams au sujet d'Emerson: "A young man named R. W. Emerson . . . starts a new doctrine of Transcendentalism, declares all the old revelations superannuated and worn out, and announces the approach of new revelations and prophecies" (cit. Cabot, *Memoir of R. W. Emerson*, p. 410). On voit que l'erreur, si erreur il y a, qui fait d'Emerson le chef du Transcendentalisme est ancienne.

³ A ce sujet l'attitude de M. Girard est la suivante. Il ne nie pas que l'idéalisme allemand n'ait exercé une certaine influence sur les Transcendantaux mais cette influence ne s'est fait sentir que sur "les unitaires rationalistes" qui ne sont pas selon lui les véritables Transcendantaux. En tout cas Kant n'a eu aucune influence sur le Transcendentalisme sous sa forme "essentiellement religieuse," ce qui nous paraît peu exact comme on le verra par la suite, au sujet de Coleridge surtout.

lockienne, l'autre allemande et kantienne. Le Transcendantalisme est le conflit de ces deux philosophies et le conflit est ancien. On a beau ne pas lire les philosophes allemands dans l'original et les déclarer obscurs, voire inintelligibles, leur influence, déclare-t-on, se fait partout sentir. Que, de fort bonne heure, les deux courants de pensée, allemand et américain, se rencontrent et se confondent sur le plan philosophique, nul doute. C'est ce qu'indique le collaborateur de la *North American Review* dans son histoire des systèmes idéalistes avant Cousin: "We allude . . . to the Transcendental philosophy founded by the celebrated Kant, a professor at the University of Koenigsberg in Prussia."¹

C'est à lui que les adversaires de Locke en Amérique prennent la théorie des idées innées (qui est fausse), et l'idéalisme nouveau qui est absurde mais dont le succès s'explique par l'âme de vérité qu'il contient et qui consiste à mettre en évidence: "The independent and substantial existence of our thinking part, 'the God within the mind.'" Le spiritualisme nouveau est d'origine allemande: "Its foundations were first actually laid bare by the strong thinkers in Germany, a source from which has emanated more of the intellectual light on the subjects of philosophical inquiry than most writers in our language have yet been ready to acknowledge."² L'auteur de cet article—G. Ripley—se réjouit de voir les spiritualistes français suivre la même voie.

Ce n'est que par ignorance que l'on accuse les philosophes transcendantaux d'obscurité.³ Pour les comprendre il faut se placer à leur point de vue: celui de la conscience intime. Les disciples de Kant écrivent pour ceux qui cherchent "with faith and hope a solution of questions which relate to spirit and form, substance and life, free will and fate, God and eternity."

Ces grandes questions qui préoccupent notre époque de réflexion, Kant et ses disciples les posent d'un point de vue tout nouveau. Au lieu de faire dépendre de la nature du monde extérieur nos intuitions, c'est de la nature de nos intuitions qu'ils font dépendre le monde. "We have here the key to the whole critical philosophy." Deux systèmes de philosophie sont en présence, "the one beginning with

¹ *North Am. Rev.*, XXIX (1829), 103, 117.

² *Ch. Exam.*, IX (1830), 70.

³ *Ibid.*, XIV (1833), 108 ff.

nature and proceeding upward to intelligence, the other beginning with intelligence and ending in nature. The first is natural philosophy, the second transcendental philosophy." La prééminence intellectuelle de l'Allemagne en science, histoire, poésie est due à l'influence de sa philosophie et à l'emploi de la méthode transcendante. Cette influence salutaire s'est fait sentir surtout ("most conspicuously") en théologie mais aussi "in every department of intellectual exertion": "A philosophy which has given such an impulse to mental culture and . . . which has done so much to establish and to extend the spiritual in man and the ideal in nature, needs no apology; it commends itself by its fruits."¹ C'est tout l'acquis de nos connaissances que la philosophie nouvelle met en question.² Elle prétend supplanter l'ancienne mais n'offre rien de satisfaisant pour la remplacer. L'arrogance des novateurs suffit pour condamner leur doctrine. "There is prima facie evidence against it. It is abstruse in its dogmas, fantastic in its dress, and foreign in its origin. It comes from Germany." La philosophie allemande a tout envahi: "Poetry, theology, philosophy, all have been infected." L'Allemagne est pour les novateurs le foyer de la vie et de l'activité religieuse: "The religious speculations of the Germans are closely connected with their philosophical opinions, if indeed they do not proceed entirely from this fountain." D'une philosophie à l'autre les différences sont radicales: "Either one party or the other is entirely wrong." Quant à l'auteur de cette étude son siège est fait. Le dernier mot de la philosophie est dans Bacon et dans Locke qui ont fixé les limites de la raison.³

Kant est inintelligible.⁴ Il écrit en hiéroglyphes. Il est intraduisible, sauf en grec. Il cultive l'obscur pour l'obscur. Mais il ne suffit pas de le condamner. Son influence est illimitée ("well-nigh unbounded"): "As his theory extended over the whole territory of knowledge, almost every science has in turn been infected with the wild and crude imagining of his followers."

¹ Ce n'est qu'en isolant la première partie de ce passage de son contexte que M. Girard peut faire de cette citation une condamnation du kantisme et bien à tort comme la suite le prouve. Cf. Girard, p. 411.

² Ch. Exam., XXIII (1837), 174 ff.

³ Voir du même auteur un compte-rendu de *Nature* par Emerson. *Ibid.*, XXI, 371 ff.: "Transcendental philosophy took its rise in Germany" et ses doléances à ce sujet.

⁴ *North Am. Rev.* (July, 1839), pp. 44 ff.

Et ce n'est pas sans raison que, sous le couvert du kantisme, le radicalisme de Kant fait prendre en méfiance toute philosophie et que l'on regarde ce système "as a mere cover for an attack on all the principles of government and social order, and a philosophical religion as atheism itself."¹

Dans la brochure que Norton édite en 1840, sous le titre de *Transcendentalisme*, tous ces reproches sont repris. Norton et les collaborateurs de la *Princeton Review* confondent dans le même anathème et le même reproche de panthéisme et d'athéisme les philosophes allemands, leurs disciples et vulgarisateurs, y compris Coleridge, Cousin, Carlyle, et Emerson. Allemands, français, anglais, ou américains, tous ces systèmes "are districts of the same kingdom; alike in arrogance, in nonsense and impiety."

Pour le prouver d'ailleurs, et quelque partiaux et prévenus qu'ils soient contre les novateurs, Norton et les collaborateurs de la *Princeton Review* renvoient aux textes originaux. Ils connaissent fort bien Kant, Hegel, Schelling, et Cousin. Les citations sont nombreuses. Ils établissent même un rapprochement original et juste entre le Transcendentalisme européen et américain et les philosophies orientales. Cette brochure, malgré son ton agressif, est un fort bon résumé de philosophie transcendante.

A l'époque où nous sommes le cas est jugé. L'origine allemande et kantienne du Transcendentalisme américain est devenue un lieu commun des controverses en cours à ce sujet.

Que les Transcendentalistes aient accepté l'étiquette kantienne, la fait est non moins certain. Ils ne suivent pas Kant à toutes les étapes de sa critique, bien s'en faut, mais quand il s'agit d'opposer au sensualisme de Locke l'existence d'un ordre supérieur et, à proprement parler, *transcendental* de certitude, ils sont kantiens. C'est à Kant qu'ils empruntent à cet effet leur théorie de la connaissance. Désireux de défendre leur idéalisme, ils ne manquent pas d'utiliser l'arme la plus forte et la plus précise qu'on ait jamais forgée contre

¹ L'essai déjà cité sur le Transcendentalisme justifierait les craintes de l'auteur: "It is hostile to the old systems and subversive of them. It is based on principles which show . . . our religion but an empty show . . . that the old forms of government have no foundation in reason," etc. (*An Essay on Transcendentalism*, pp. 27-28). L'auteur est un fervent Transcendentaliste.

les sensualistes et les sceptiques, c'est à dire les distinctions et la nomenclature de la *Critique* kantienne.

C'est ce dont Emerson et Theodore Parker en particulier ont été parfaitement avertis. "Placé mieux que personne," selon les propres paroles de M. Girard, "pour étudier le Transcendantalisme," Emerson est positif à cet égard dans un passage bien connu: "It is well known . . . that the Idealism of the present day acquired the name of Transcendental from the use of that term by Immanuel Kant," etc. (*Works*, I, 339-40).

Parker, que M. Girard cite erronément (p. 422, n. 6) est du même avis. Parker a repris plusieurs fois après Emerson l'éloge de Kant. Sans doute, déclare Parker dans le *Dial*,¹ est-il plus aisé de lire les œuvres complètes de Scott que la *Critique* de Kant. Mais—c'est ce mais que M. Girard supprime dans sa citation: "Ses pensées [de Kant] sont des révolutions, ses livres des batailles."

Parker n'a pas la superstition de l'Allemagne, mais s'il est vrai que la philosophie se meurt en Angleterre et en Amérique, pourquoi ne pas en chercher en Allemagne la résurrection? Kant est le fondateur de la philosophie moderne. Parker trouvait la "brillante mosaïque" de Cousin peu satisfaisante et il s'adressait à Kant "one of the profoundest thinkers in the world, though one of the worst writers, even of Germany."² A défaut de conclusions, Kant procurait à Parker la vraie méthode et le mettait sur "la droite voie." Parker lui devait "les grandes intuitions primordiales de la nature humaine," sur lesquelles il fondait sa philosophie de la religion.

COLERIDGE ET LE TRANSCENDANTALISME

Quand on reprochait aux Transcendantaux l'origine allemande et surtout kantienne de leur doctrine, c'était sur un point très précis que l'on faisait porter le débat. Il faut bien justifier ce qu'on innove

¹ *Dial*, I, 320 ff.; IV, 408.

² Goddard, *Studies in New England Transcendentalism*, pp. 88-89. Faisant œuvre ici uniquement d'historien nous ne discuterons pas dans quelle mesure le Transcendantalisme américain et kantien se ressemblent et diffèrent au sens philosophique du mot. Les premiers critiques et historiens du Transcendantalisme, tel Murdock, n'ont pas manqué de faire des réserves à ce sujet. La Transcendance au sens de Kant est bien loin d'être exactement ce que l'entendent Coleridge et Cousin. Comment, en particulier, les vues de ces deux penseurs se sont substituées bien des fois à celles de Kant dans la synthèse transcendentaliste, ce serait à la critique philosophique de le montrer. Voir à ce sujet W. Riley, *American Thought*, 235 ff.

et, si peu systématique que l'on soit, pour passer de la connaissance rationnelle comme l'entendait Locke, à la connaissance intuitive, les Transcendantaux avaient besoin d'une théorie de la connaissance et des facultés. C'est cette théorie qu'ils ont empruntée à Coleridge. Nous ne referons pas l'histoire de la distinction entre *l'Entendement et la Raison* (*Understanding and Reason*). Mais nous croyons, avec les critiques du mouvement et les Transcendantaux eux-mêmes, qu'elle constitue le centre du débat et que l'histoire du Transcendantalisme tourne autour d'elle.¹ On sait la fortune que devait faire cette distinction empruntée à Kant et vulgarisée par Coleridge et Carlyle, reprise surtout par Emerson. Emerson voyait en elle "the key to all theology and a theory of human life" (*Journals*, III, 237). Que cette distinction contînt en elle-même tout un programme de renaissance religieuse, philosophique et littéraire aussi bien que de réforme sociale, Emerson l'a prouvé en en faisant le fondement de ses premières adresses et de son livre sur la *Nature*. La distinction de Coleridge fut pour lui une véritable révélation.

A la faculté discursive condamnée à évoluer dans le champ étroit de l'expérience et à mesurer strictement l'étendue de ses découvertes à celle du monde sensible, Coleridge substituait la notion de la Raison intuitive et les profondeurs du sentiment. On découvrait le monde intérieur. C'était le point de départ d'une vie et d'une ère nouvelles. Ainsi l'ont bien compris les Transcendantaux et leurs critiques. Quelles que fussent les obscurités et les fantaisies métaphysiques de Coleridge on trouvait en lui "Dieu perçu d'un point de vue central," "God viewed from one position" (Emerson, *Journals*, II, 277). Si la distinction est fondée, le Transcendantalisme est vrai. C'est ce que comprennent les adversaires, de là l'acharnement qu'ils mettent à la réfuter. En quoi faisant, ce qu'ils attaquent, ils ne s'y trompent point, est capital, c'est la prétension qu'ont les novateurs de bouleverser tout l'ordre de la connaissance et d'accorder au sentiment et

¹ "Every English and American reader must fail to penetrate even the husk of German and mock-German philosophy, unless he has accepted the distinction between the reason and the understanding" (*Transcendentalism* [two articles from the *Princeton Review*], p. 15). C'est elle que les critiques d'Emerson relèvent dans ses premiers ouvrages. Cf. *ibid.*, *pass.* et pp. 17-18. L'auteur du compte-rendu de *Nature* n'a pas de peine à retrouver dans le livre d'Emerson "the distinction so much insisted on by the New School, between the Reason and the Understanding." Mais il n'y a pas deux ordres de vérités et l'auteur n'admet pas le distinguo (*Ch. Exam.*, XXI, 383). Cf. Marsh, *Aids to Reflection, Preliminary Essay*, pp. 95-99; Carlyle, *Essays*, II, 25 ff.; *The Life of J. Sterling*, I, chap. viii. Pour la critique voir Murdock, *op. cit.*, chap. xiv.

à l'intuition des droits qui étaient jusqu'ici le privilège de la raison raisonnante. Une révolution est là en germe dans tous les ordres de l'action et de la pensée, de là les attaques.

On voit combien est étroit le point de vue de M. Girard. Non, Coleridge n'a pas donné seulement aux Unitaires orthodoxes un moyen *in extremis* de concilier le dogme avec la philosophie. Pour les Transcendantaux et même pour leurs adversaires Coleridge a été un véritable maître de la vie intérieure et un instaurateur de la vraie spiritualité. Le Transcendentalisme américain sous sa forme essentiellement religieuse n'a pas eu de source plus authentique que ses ouvrages.¹

C'est cet aspect le plus large et le plus religieux de la philosophie de Coleridge que le président Marsh mettait en lumière dès 1829 dans sa célèbre Préface aux *Aids to Reflection*,¹ véritable manifeste du Transcendentalisme naissant. Marsh dénonce l'union contre nature d'une philosophie sensualiste de son essence et qui nie le surnaturel avec un mouvement religieux. Il ramène la controverse entre libéraux et orthodoxes au conflit entre le spiritualisme et le rationalisme lockien. Il montre très bien que la renaissance religieuse et philosophique sont inséparables et qu'elles peuvent avoir lieu à la faveur de la distinction proposée par Coleridge. Fond et forme il y a dans Coleridge les sources d'une apologétique nouvelle. Coleridge est aussi religieux que Pascal, et de la même façon (*The Complete Works of S. T. Coleridge* [New York, 1884], Vol. I, p. 26). Il nous conduit au point central et intérieur où "la foi et la raison se rencontrent" (p. 40). Coleridge fonde la religion sur le sens moral et la conscience (pp. 69-70). Pour Coleridge le christianisme n'est que "la perfection de la raison humaine" (p. 73). Il n'y a pas deux vérités. Ce qui est vrai en religion doit l'être en philosophie (pp. 76-77). Le centre de la philosophie de Coleridge c'est sa distinction entre l'entendement et la raison (pp. 97-98).

¹ Coleridge est le seul à qui le Transcendentalisme fut naturel: "To him it was truth; he was a mystic; he had faith in what he said, for his words were to him the symbols of his own thoughts" *Transcendentalism* (two articles from the *Princeton Review*), p. 98. Cf. *Ch. Exam.*, XIV, 108 ff., une intéressante défense de Coleridge: "He is certainly not a shallow writer, but, as we think, a very profound one." Sur l'influence de Coleridge, *ibid.*, XXIII, 186: "Coleridge and Carlyle have been the leaders of the sect in England, and it is somewhat remarkable that the popularity of each is greater on this side of the Atlantic than it is at home."

Voilà comment Coleridge se présentait dès 1829 en Nouvelle-Angleterre aux esprits désireux d'une renaissance religieuse et l'on voit mal, après cela, ce que la définition du Transcendantalisme sous sa forme essentiellement religieuse pouvait laisser à désirer.¹

COUSIN ET LE TRANSCENDANTALISME

La part qui revient au fondateur de l'électicisme français dans l'histoire du Transcendantalisme américain est importante. Nous ne croyons pas cependant que l'influence de Cousin se soit exercée uniquement ni principalement dans le sens indiqué par M. Girard. Nous croyons même que si, comme M. Girard a prétendu le prouver, le Transcendantalisme avait trouvé avant 1835 dans la personne de Channing ses formes les plus originales et définitives, l'influence de Cousin aurait été à peu près nulle à ce moment-là sur le mouvement. M. Girard ne nous semble guère dans le vrai quand il écarte du débat la théorie cousinienne de *la Raison spontanée* et nous montre les Transcendantaux ne cherchant dans l'électicisme français qu'un moyen de concilier "la raison et l'évangile." Dans son excellent résumé de philosophie transcendante John Murdock soutiendra, au contraire, non sans motif, que la pierre angulaire du Transcendantalisme c'est la théorie cousinienne de la raison.² Pour Murdock, comme pour M. Girard, mais dans un sens autrement large, le Transcendantalisme n'est autre chose que l'électicisme démarqué par les Unitaires libéraux. La source authentique entre toutes en est *l'Introduction à l'histoire de la philosophie* traduite par Linberg. C'est là, à en croire Murdock, que Brownson, Emerson et Parker ont puisé non

¹ L'histoire de l'influence exercée par Coleridge sur l'évolution religieuse des Transcendantaux serait à étudier en détail. C'est à Coleridge et à sa distinction des facultés que James Freeman Clarke reconnaît avoir pris l'art de subordonner la logique à l'intuition (*J. F. Clarke*, par E. E. Hale, Boston, 1891 [p. 42]). Channing trouvait dans la poésie de Coleridge et de Wordsworth "une théologie plus spirituelle que dans les écrits de controverse des Unitaires et Trinitaires" (*Ap. Peabody*, p. 72). Et il déclarait devoir à Coleridge plus qu'à tout autre penseur (*ibid.*, p. 75). Dans son compte-rendu du *Rationale* de Martineau fort important dans l'histoire du Transcendantalisme G. Ripley ne manque pas de rapprocher les vues de l'auteur avec celle du président Marsh dans "son admirable" Préface aux *Aids to Reflection*, *Ch. Exam.*, XXI, 236.

² *Op. cit.*, 178 ff.: "Whoever, therefore, would understand the Transcendental writers, must first understand, if he can, the French philosopher Cousin and the German pantheists. . . . The radical principle of the Transcendental philosophy, the cornerstone of the whole edifice is Cousin's doctrine that Spontaneous Reason acquaints us with the true and essential nature of things." L'essentiel de la théorie cousinienne de la Raison est donné par Frothingham, *op. cit.*, pp. 67-73. Voir surtout p. 72.

seulement leurs principes philosophiques mais jusqu'à leurs formes de style et de pensée, ce qui d'ailleurs est contestable.¹

Qu'il y eût dans ce fait de quoi inspirer bien des méfiances à ceux des Unitaires qui pouvaient être tentés d'emprunter à Cousin les éléments d'une apologétique nouvelle, les témoignages contemporains le prouvent. Si certains, tels Brownson ou Ripley, se laissaient prendre à la large tolérance et aux sympathies chrétiennes affichées par Cousin, tous n'étaient pas dupes et découvraient qu'au fond sa spiritualité n'en est pas une: "We may well grieve," lisons-nous dans le *Christian Examiner*,² "that the genius of Cousin should avail through its attractive speculations . . . to substitute a mystical faith in a God that is no God, in a Christianity that is no Christianity, for the faith of the Bible which so long has answered so well."

Les craintes de Channing n'étaient pas moins vives. Il regrettait de voir les Transcendantaux s'identifier avec ce qu'il appelait le système "*grossier*" de Cousin et compromettre la vie originale du mouvement pour substituer l'inspiration personnelle et ce qu'on nommait autour de lui "*l'égot-théisme*," au christianisme.³ C'est dans le même esprit que les adversaires, tel Norton, attaquent la philosophie religieuse de Cousin à la base de laquelle ils retrouvent la théorie panthéiste de la Raison divine. Qu'elle ait embarrassé les partisans de Cousin eux-mêmes, la preuve en est dans les contradictions où tombe Brownson quand il entreprend de défendre son maître contre le reproche de panthéisme. Il n'y arrive qu'en sacrifiant l'*Introduction à l'histoire de la philosophie*⁴ et en tirant du côté des Ecossais et même de Locke celui en qui l'on prétend voir un disciple de Fichte et de Hegel, et la défense est assez faible après l'exposé fort complet du système de Cousin et de sa philosophie de la Raison donné par Brownson qui l'accepte malgré certaines réserves.

¹ Pour Norton et la *Princeton Review*, Emerson est bien un disciple authentique de Cousin. La question demanderait un sérieux examen. M. Girard suggère lui-même le rapprochement (p. 486, n. 66). Il a perdu là une belle occasion de faire d'Emerson un Transcendantal de marque. Nulle sur l'évolution religieuse d'Emerson, l'influence de Cousin n'a pas manqué, croyons-nous, d'inspirer la théorie emersonienne de la Raison. C'est ce que nous nous proposons d'étudier à part.

² *Ch. Exam.* (July, 1840), p. 380.

³ Frothingham, pp. 111-12.

⁴ Cf. *Ch. Exam.*, XXI, 33 ff. et 181, *pass.*

Que Cousin ait emprunté aux Allemands sa théorie de la Raison, principe essentiel de son système, tout le monde est d'accord là-dessus. On n'a pas de peine à découvrir dans ses œuvres les traces "du monstre échappé aux forêts d'Allemagne." Si la méthode cousinienne et le point de départ de l'électisme diffèrent de ceux de Hegel, de Fichte et de Schelling, le point d'arrivée est le même. Le fait n'est pas douteux.¹ Murdock et la *Princeton Review* en particulier en donnent des preuves fort précises.² Les articles de la *Princeton Review* s'appuient sur des citations de première main et renvoient aux sources originales. Nous voyons mal ce qu'on pourrait reprendre à cette critique de l'équivoque cousinienne. La *Princeton Review* relève très bien ce qu'il y a de théâtral et de truqué dans l'idéalisme de Cousin. Elle raille sa façon de disposer haut la main des plus graves problèmes. A la vanité de l'électique, pair de France, elle oppose la modestie de Descartes. Elle stigmatise comme il convient la matérialisme historique de l'*Introduction à la philosophie de l'histoire*, la cynique apologie de la guerre et du succès qui embarrasse fort les partisans de Cousin.³ Nous ne croyons pas que l'on ait mieux montré le vice inhérent à l'idéalisme du fondateur de l'électisme que l'a fait la *Princeton Review* dans le passage suivant:

He does not indeed teach what is commonly meant by fatalism. He is a strenuous advocate for the freedom of the will and talks much of free personality. But then this freedom itself is but one of the products of a deeper fatalism which pervades the universe and works out its results in all things.

Cousin est un brillant orateur, un rhéteur plus qu'un philosophe; la théorie de la Raison spontanée est le centre de son système et cette

¹ C'est ce que reconnaît Brownson lui-même. *Ch. Exam.*, XXI, 62: "Once in the Absolute, he does not differ essentially from the new German school. He follows Schelling and Hegel very nearly in going from God to nature and humanity, and in his march through history, but the method is different." S'il y avait doute à ce sujet on trouvera dans l'article de Brownson toutes les preuves requises.

² "Cousin seems aware that these views approximate so near those of Schelling that they may expose him to the charge of pantheism, a charge which he did not well know how to answer" (Murdock, *op. cit.*, p. 154). Et tel est bien le verdict des historiens actuels et les plus autorisés de la philosophie. Cf. K. Hoeffding, *Histoire de la philosophie moderne* (trad. Bordier), II, 323: A la théorie de Reid sur la perception immédiate Cousin "ajouta plus tard encore la théorie de Schelling et de Hegel sur la raison absolue."

³ Et qui était bien peu faite pour lui attirer les sympathies de W. E. Channing, apôtre de la paix, et dont on sait les diatribes contre Napoléon en particulier (*Remarks on the Life and Character of Napoleon Bonaparte*) et contre le guerre.

théorie est allemande. C'est elle qui fait de Cousin un Transcendantaliste. Sa religion n'en est pas une. Il enseigne le panthéisme tout en protestant de ses sympathies chrétiennes. Son matérialisme historique a perverti sa morale. Voilà sur Cousin le verdict des contemporains (y compris Channing), verdict contre lequel Ripley, Brownson et Henry auront bien de la peine à s'inscrire en faux.¹

CARLYLE ET LE TRANSCENDANTALISME

Que dès avant 1836 Carlyle ait été, au même titre que Coleridge et Cousin, l'intermédiaire obligé de l'idéologie allemande outre-mer par ses articles très remarqués dans les revues anglaises, qu'à partir de 1835, surtout par les soins d'Emerson et par l'édition américaine au succès considérable de *Sartor Resartus*, il ait apporté au Transcendantalisme un renfort capital et tout de suite reconnu, c'est ce qu'il serait aisé de prouver. Nous voudrions du moins, par les notes suivantes, inspirer des doutes très sérieux sur le bien fondé de l'ostracisme prononcé par M. Girard contre Carlyle. Le *Christian Examiner* de septembre 1836 (XXI, 74) par la plume de N. L. Frothingham consacre un article fort élogieux à *Sartor Resartus*. Il en relève surtout le caractère profondément religieux: "It has more sound religion and ethics than slumber in the folios of many a body of divinity. . . . What we chiefly prize in it is its philosophic, spiritual, humane cast of thought. We fearlessly commend it to . . . many who will find their hearts greatly in unison with it." Voilà pour prouver

¹ Sur la controverse à ce sujet cf. W. Riley, "La Philosophie française en Amérique," *Revue philosophique*, novembre 1917.

Nous avons vainement cherché le numéro de la *North American Review*—indiqué par M. Girard, p. 471, n. 46—dans lequel l'éditeur de la revue, Alexandre Everett (c'est Edward Everett qu'il faut lire) introduisait en 1829 l'électicisme auprès de ses lecteurs. En revanche (même année, même numéro) la revue donne bien un compte-rendu des œuvres de Cousin. Nous y lisons que Cousin est aussi obscur que les Allemands auxquels il emprunte sa terminologie. Ses vues sont trop sommaires pour les comprendre. Il ne résout pas les questions qu'il pose. Quant à l'idéalisme, qu'il s'agisse de Platon, de Kant ou de Cousin c'est "un tissu d'absurdités" (*ibid.* [July, 1829], pp. 67 ff.).

Nous avons vainement cherché également "les remarques fort élogieuses" dont la *North American Review* aurait fait suivre en 1832 *l'Introduction à l'histoire de la philosophie* (trad. Linberg). Par contre nous trouvons bien à la date indiquée (XXXV, 19-36) un résumé de la célèbre *Introduction* d'après l'édition française avec les remarques suivantes fort peu élogieuses: "His explanation [de la Raison spontanée] does not differ essentially from that of Fichte." Et elle n'explique rien. "There is in this writer a fondness for system and a disposition to generalize on insufficient grounds, which will bar his approach to perfection" (p. 35). Cousin n'a pas une aussi bonne presse en Amérique que le prétend M. Girard.

que "comme nous l'affirmions plus haut, entre l'individualisme hautain de l'historien anglais et le spiritualisme des premiers Transcendantalistes il n'y a rien de commun" (Girard, p. 411).¹

Passons au second point: "L'interprète de la pensée allemande auprès des peuples anglo-saxons n'eut pour l'idéalisme d'un Kant . . . aucune espèce de sympathie" (Girard, p. 411).

Venons à la preuve: "Kant's philosophy," écrit Carlyle dans un de ses essais, cité par M. Girard, "is not only an absurdity, but a wickedness and a horror . . . his doctrine is a region of boundless baleful gloom, too cunningly broken here and there by splendors of unholy fire." Ouvrons maintenant les *Essais* de Carlyle (I, 74). Nous y retrouvons bien le verdict ci-dessus mais encadré de la façon suivante: "Among a certain class of thinkers, does a frantic exaggeration in sentiment . . . anywhere break forth, it is directly labelled as Kantism. . . . For often in such circles" ici la phrase citée par M. Girard et que Carlyle parlant cette fois en son nom fait suivre de la remarque suivante: "If anything in the history of philosophy could surprise us, it might well be this." Et Carlyle fait l'éloge de Kant.

Que penser d'une pareille méthode de citer les textes et d'écrire l'histoire ?

¹ L'histoire de *Sartor Resartus* en Amérique constitue un chapitre des plus importants de l'histoire du Transcendantalisme. On sait que le succès du livre fut incomparablement plus grand en Amérique qu'en Angleterre. L'accueil fut des plus bienveillants même dans les milieux théologiques et la publication successive de la *Révolution française* et des *Essais* de Carlyle ne fit que le confirmer. Carlyle fit entre autres sur Channing une impression profonde (cf. *Carlyle-Emerson Correspondence*, I, 59). La *North American Review* loue le livre (octobre 1835, p. 481) et y trouve "a great deal of deep thought, sound principle, and fine writing." Elle rappelle que Carlyle est l'auteur des articles parus dans les revues anglaises "which have attracted great attention by the singularity of their style and the richness and depth of their matter." Quand il s'agit de publier en 1835 un organe du mouvement nouveau, *The Transcendentalist*, c'est à Carlyle que l'on songe comme éditeur. On ne s'est pas trompé en reconnaissant dans *Sartor* en particulier la bible transcendante. Cf. *New-Englander*, I (1843), 503 pass., "A Plain Discussion with a Transcendentalist."

² Le maniement des textes semble un art inconnu à M. Girard (voir en particulier p. 417 de son ouvrage ses citations de Mme de Staél). Voici quelques errata à ajouter à notre liste (p. 389). M. Girard veut mettre sous l'autorité d'Emerson "placé mieux que personne pour étudier le transcendentalisme," bien qu'il ne soit pas transcendental, sa définition "essentiellement religieuse" du mouvement. Malheureusement la citation n'est pas d'Emerson. Elle est de W. H. Channing (*Memoirs of Margaret Fuller*, II, 11) (p. 438). L'auteur des *Discourses on the Philosophy of Religion* (1836) n'est pas Parker étudiant à Harvard à cette époque mais Ripley "l'âme" du Transcendantalisme (*ibid.* p. 438, n. 6). Le discours de Norton sur *The Latest Form of Infidelity* n'est pas de 1838 mais de juillet 1839, un an exactement après l'adresse fameuse d'Emerson à Cambridge et c'est bien à Emerson encore plus qu'à Ripley que Norton riposte dans son discours.

Concluons: Tel qu'il se présente à nous dans les périodiques et les ouvrages de controverse de l'époque et pris dans son ensemble le Transcendentalisme américain est un idéalisme nouveau qui devient de notoriété publique aux environs de 1836, au moment où Emerson compose ses premiers ouvrages et où paraissent en Amérique ceux de Carlyle. Ce n'est pas uniquement une forme plus large de l'unitarisme mais *une philosophie nouvelle* et d'application générale,¹ que les contemporains et les Transcendentalistes eux-mêmes, à tort ou à raison, confondent avec l'idéalisme allemand et surtout kantien.

On attaque cette philosophie parcequ'elle est nouvelle dans son fond et dans sa forme, parcequ'elle est d'origine étrangère, qu'elle prétend soumettre à la Raison prise dans un sens nouveau des problèmes qu'elle n'a pas autorité pour résoudre, qu'elle confond l'ordre poétique et philosophique et finalement qu'on la soupçonne de conduire au panthéisme en religion.

Cette philosophie, supposée allemande dans ses sources, on la connaît surtout sous sa forme anglaise et française, par Coleridge, Carlyle et Cousin que l'on confond dans le même anathème, si l'on est dans le camp adverse, et dans le même éloge si l'on est Transcendentaliste, avec Kant et les idéalistes allemands.

Le pli est pris. Il est entendu désormais que "la philosophie transcendante a son origine en Allemagne." Procédé facile et que l'on s'explique, non seulement par ce que Coleridge, Carlyle, Cousin et leurs disciples américains empruntent réellement aux philosophes allemands et qui n'est pas négligeable, mais encore par la considération suivante. Résolus à condamner a priori et à désigner à la vindicte publique un mouvement d'idées qu'ils jugent dangereux pour la foi, les Unitaires orthodoxes ne se soucient point d'en rechercher les sources américaines. Il est de bonne guerre de dénoncer le Transcendentalisme comme une importation étrangère et de le rendre suspect en le présentant sous sa forme radicale et allemande. On le confond donc avec ce mouvement philosophique qui lui ressemble en exagérant certains traits: l'idéalisme allemand contemporain.

¹ De ces applications multiples Ch. M. Ellis nous donne, dans la brochure qu'on lui attribue sur le *Transcendentalisme* (Boston, 1842), le programme très complet et précis sous ces rubriques: "Critique," "Art," "Gouvernement et organisation sociale," "Religion." Le chapitre sur la critique est en particulier fort original.

Cette confusion, les Transcendantalistes l'acceptent, à peu près à l'unanimité. Moitié défi, moitié expédient, ils adoptent l'épithète nouvelle d'origine philosophique mais dont le sens s'est d'ailleurs beaucoup étendu pour désigner un état d'esprit particulier.¹ L'étiquette allemande est pour les Transcendantalistes un moyen commode d'affirmer contre les partisans de l'ancien sensualisme leur tendances idéalistes et de se donner à peu de frais une philosophie.

Tel se présente le Transcendantalisme sous son aspect historique. Si légitime qu'il soit de vouloir reviser le procès il est impossible de ne pas tenir compte de ces faits.

En réalité ce que les Transcendantalistes doivent à Kant et à sa critique c'est, et à peu près uniquement, contre Locke la reconnaissance d'un ordre d'idées dépassant l'expérience et permettant d'établir la certitude sur la base du sens intime et de l'intuition. A Cousin principalement, et par son intermédiaire aux métaphysiciens allemands à qui Cousin l'emprunte, ils doivent la théorie de la Raison conçue comme un moyen direct et infaillible de connaissance transcendantale.

Quant à leur théorie si importante (et au fond d'ailleurs si autochtone dans l'œuvre de Channing par exemple et si personnelle pour chacun d'eux) de l'existence d'un sens religieux autonome, c'est à Coleridge, selon nous (sans oublier B. Constant et ses précurseurs allemands Jacobi et Herder²), beaucoup plus qu'à Cousin qu'ils l'empruntent. Ces distinctions, les Transcendantalistes et les historiens du mouvement transcendental ne les ont pas faites et il est bien vrai que la confusion et l'acceptation en bloc de toutes les influences énumérées ci-dessus est un trait caractéristique du Transcendantalisme américain. Elles ne s'en imposent pas moins et quand la thèse de M. Girard n'aurait servi qu'à les mettre en évidence, elle serait par là justifiée. M. Girard a eu la très louable intention de reviser un procès et de rendre au spiritualisme français la part qui lui revient,

¹ Sur cette extension populaire du vocabulaire et sur les confusions que de bonne heure elle implique voir les remarques de Brownson, *Ch. Exam.*, XXIII, 181 ff., et particulièrement *An Essay on Transcendentalism* (Boston, 1842), *pass.* et pp. 8-10; *Dial*, III, 405-6; *New Englander*, I (1843), 503.

² Pas plus que Schleiermacher ni de Wette dont certains mettaient la philosophie religieuse au-dessus de l'ouvrage fameux de B. Constant auquel d'ailleurs M. Girard a rendu pleine justice. Cf. *Ch. Exam.*, XX, 164.

et elle est grande, dans l'histoire du Transcendantalisme américain. On pouvait y arriver, croyons nous, sans déplacer l'axe historique du mouvement transcendental, sans en fausser à certains égards la physionomie originale ni sacrifier surtout aux mânes de Victor Cousin qui ne le mérite guère, après Kant, Coleridge, et Carlyle, l'œuvre entière d'Emerson.

RÉGIS MICHAUD

SMITH COLLEGE

THE REQUIREMENTS OF A POET

A NOTE ON THE SOURCES OF BEN JONSON'S *TIMBER*, PARAGRAPH 130

The studies of Schelling,¹ Spingarn,² Simpson,³ and Castelain⁴ would seem to have left undiscovered no source for any part of Jonson's *Timber* (1641). A field however rich would seem to offer but meager gleanings after such assiduous reaping. Paragraph 130 has already been shown by M. Castelain to be an aggregation of verbal borrowings, echoes, and close translations from Scaliger, Cicero, Seneca, Ovid, Petronius, Quintilian, Horace, Valerius Maximus, Bacon, Persius, Simylus, Daniel Heinsius, Aulus Gellius, and Suetonius. In the same paragraph, however, there is an analysis of the requirements of a poet which is of peculiar interest to the student of the theory of poetry and the theory of rhetoric in the English Renaissance. This analysis, I believe, has not previously been traced to its source or discussed critically.

In the passage mentioned, Jonson requires of the poet the following qualities (the reader is referred to the edition of M. Castelain for the complete text):

First, wee require in our Poet or maker a goodnes of naturall wit. For, whereas all other Arts consist of Doctrine, and Precepts: the Poet must bee able by nature, and instinct, to powre out the Treasure of his minde. . . .

To this perfection of Nature in our Poet, wee require Exercise of those parts, and frequent. Things wrote with labour, deserve to be so read, and will last their Age.

The third requisite in our Poet, or Maker, is *Imitation*, to bee able to convert the substance or Riches of another *Poet*, to his owne use. To make chiose of one excellent man above the rest, and so to follow him, till he grow very Hee; or so like him, as the Copie may be mistaken for the Principall.

¹ Ben Jonson, *Discoveries*, ed. by Felix E. Schelling, Boston, 1892.

² Joel Elias Spingarn, *A History of Literary Criticism in the Renaissance*, New York, 1899.

³ Percy Simpson, "Tanquam Explorator, Jonson's Method in the Discoveries," *Mod. Lang. Rev.*, II (1906-7), 201 ff.

⁴ Ben Jonson, *Discoveries*, a critical edition by Maurice Castelain, Paris, 1906.

Not, as a Creature, that swallowes, what it takes in, crude, raw, or undigested; but, that feeds with an Appetite, and hath a Stomacke to concoct, devide, and turne all into nourishment. Not, to imitate servilely, as Horace saith. . . .

But, that which we especially require in him is an exactnesse of Studie, and multiplicity of reading, which maketh a full man. . . . There goes more to his making then so; For to nature, Exercise, Imitation and Study, *Art* must be added, to make all these perfect. And, though these challenge to themselves much, in the making up of our Maker, it is *Art* only can lead him to perfection.

From the marginal notes we can summarize his analysis as follows: (1) *ingenium*; (2) *exercitatio*; (3) *imitatio*; (4) *lectio*; (5) *ars (ars coron)*.

It is at once evident that there is just such an inconsistency between Jonson's insistence on the inspirational theory of poetry at the beginning and his final dictum that art only can lead the poet to perfection, as one would expect from a commonplace book. The result is that the paragraph as it stands is a critical monstrosity fairly representative of the Renaissance eclecticism which considered every ancient an authority, both by himself and in combination with others of opposing views.

That the poet should be able by nature to pour out the treasure of his mind, that he should be gifted with *ingenium*, genius, the poetic rapture, is Platonism. Indeed Jonson quotes both Plato and Aristotle, from Seneca, not from the source, however, to uphold his point. Plato says of it, speaking through Socrates in the *Phaedrus* (245), that there is a madness which comes to those possessed of the Muses and inspires a poetical frenzy, and in the *Ion* (533 and 534) he says that good poets compose their poems not by art but through inspiration. Aristotle, also, in the *Poetics* (xvii) says that a poet must be gifted by nature or have a strain of madness in him, and in *Rhetoric* (iii. 7) he says that poetry, unlike oratory, is inspired.

Thus far Jonson is preaching the Platonic theory of inspiration in poetry. The rest of the analysis is not poetic, the theory of poetry, but rhetoric. Protagoras is said to have originated the analysis of the requirements of an orator. His analysis is as follows: (1) *φύσις* (*natura*); (2) *τέχνη* (*ars*); (3) *ἀσκησις*, or *μελέτη* (*exercitatio*).¹

¹ Cicero, *De oratore* (ed. by A. S. Wilkins), Introd., p. 57.

Plato recognizes a difference between the poet and the orator, insisting that the poet must be inspired, but following Protagoras for the requirements of the speaker. Oratorical success depends partly on natural ability and partly on art. Natural ability (*φύσις*), knowledge (*ἐπιστήμη*), and practice (*μελέτη*) are equally necessary (*Phaedrus* 269). Aristotle recognizes poetic and rhetoric as distinct arts by devoting a separate treatise to each. The poet, he thinks, should be inspired, but he makes no such requirement for the orator, furnishing, indeed, no example of such an analysis as is found in Jonson's *Timber*.

The most characteristic early Latin rhetoric is that addressed by its anonymous author to Caius Herennius (81 B.C.). The Middle Ages believed it to be written by Cicero. It presents a quite different analysis, omitting all mention of *ingenium*, but making imitation co-ordinate with the others.

Haec omnia [successful public speech] tribus rebus adsequi poterimus, *arte, imitatione, exercitatione*. Ars est praeceptio, quae dat certam viam rationemque dicendi. Imitatio est, qua impellimur cum diligenti ratione ut aliquorum similes in dicendo velimus esse. Exercitatio est adsiduus usus consuetudoque dicendi.¹

In a later section the author admits the need of natural parts and suggests the mutual interdependence of nature and training, "ut ingenio doctrina, praeceptione natura nitescat" (*Ad Her.* iii. 16. 29). The definition of *ars*, as precept, a body of theory, rules, gives the classical conception of the word as it is used by Jonson. The idea also that *exercitatio* is assiduous use, practice, falls in with the conception expressed by Jonson. This is a more limited definition, however, than that given by Cicero and Quintilian.

Cicero in his *Brutus* (vi. 25) says that eloquence may proceed from (1) *ars*, (2) *exercitatio*, and (3) *natura*, but does not there appraise their relative importance. In his *Pro Archia poeta* (i. 1), also he refers to the same qualities as (1) *ingenium*, (2) *exercitatio*, and (3) *ratio* and *disciplina*, giving his old teacher the credit for his progress in

¹ Cicero, *Opera rhetorica*, recognovit Gulielmus Friedrich. Vol. I, continens libros ad C. Herennium, et de inventione (Lipsiae, 1893), i. 2. 3.

each branch. It is in his *De oratore*, however, that Cicero gives his fullest development of the classification.

1. *Natura et ingenium* (*De orat.* i. 25. 113-15).—Natural talent gives the greatest power to public speech. Mentally it gives the orator acumen, fertility, and a good memory. Physically it equips him with a ready tongue, a good voice, vigor, and a pleasing appearance. This natural talent cannot be given by art, but it may be sharpened. With but slight talent a man may become an ordinarily good speaker but not a perfect orator. Some, however, are hopeless.

2. *Ars* (*De orat.* i. 32. 146).—By *ars* Cicero, like all classical writers on rhetoric, means the rules and precepts of the rhetoricians. The rules are the result of observing the practice of great speakers and consequently are of less importance than *natura*. "Sic esse non eloquentiam ex artificio sed artificium, ex eloquentia natum." Nevertheless the rules are a useful element in the education of an orator and should not be neglected. In a later book (*De orat.* ii. 87. 356) he repeats that art educates but cannot create an orator. For instance, the mnemonic system of Simonides is useful in strengthening the memory which a man may already have.

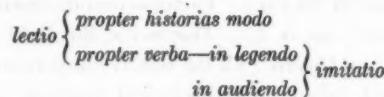
3. *Exercitatio* (*De orat.* i. 33-34).—Unlike the author of *Ad Herennium* and Jonson, who use the word in the sense of constant practice, Cicero means by *exercitatio* the pedagogical devices by means of which the student learns to speak effectively. The following, he says, are useful: speaking, writing, paraphrase, translation, imitation, reading of poetry and history, study of law and politics. In Jonson's analysis imitation and reading are elevated from their subordinate position to become main heads. Like Jonson, Cicero insists that the orator must be a learned man. In a later book (*De orat.* ii. 22. 90-92) Antonius recommends that the young student pick out a good model of imitation and imitate the good qualities, avoiding mannerisms. This approaches closer to Jonson's "one man" but does not go so far. In the *De inventione* (ii. 1), Cicero says that he adopts the best from previous writers on rhetoric, just as Zeuxis painted his Helen of Crotona from the five most beautiful virgins. Erasmus, in his *Ciceronianus* (1528), uses the same story as an argument against the imitation of one man. In Jonson's analysis there is evidently little or no direct indebtedness to Cicero.

Quintilian, the rhetorician *par excellence*, naturally gives the fullest development of this rhetorical classification in his *De institutione oratoria* (ca. 68-88 A.D.), "Facultas orandi consummatur *natura, arte, exercitatione*" (iii. 5. 1). This is the threefold division of Protagoras, Plato, and Cicero. Of the relative importance of nature and nurture, natural talent and theoretical training, Quintilian says, "Consummatus orator nisi ex utroque fieri potest" (ii. 19. 1). If an orator had to be deprived of one of these elements, he could best dispense with training. Again, a man moderately equipped with both will owe more to nature but "consummatos . . . plus doctrinae debere quam naturae putabo" (ii. 19. 2). He supports this very high opinion of training by an analogy with agriculture, for a good farmer will cause good soil to produce more than if it were uncultivated. Like Cicero, Quintilian considers *natura* as being largely physical. Thus he says that *ars* will not help a man if he is not equipped by *natura*, not only with a good memory, but with a pleasing utterance and appearance as well (xi. 3. 11-13).¹ It seems quite appropriate that both Cicero and Quintilian, while agreeing that art and nature are both necessary, should show a special bias in allotting the preponderance. Cicero, the orator, would rather like to consider himself a genius; while Quintilian, professor of rhetoric, would tend to appreciate the full value of instruction in his subject.

But to Quintilian precepts, though necessary, are not sufficient to make an orator if unsupported by exercise. Of this there are three equally necessary processes: *scribere, legere, and dicere* (x. 1. 1). In the next paragraph but one he says, *dicere, imitatio, scribendi*. This illustrates one of the salient reasons for reading—the study of expression. The student should read all literature not only for subject-matter (*propter historias modo*) but also for words, manner of expression (i. 4. 4; also x. 1. 5 ff.). But imitation, says Quintilian, is of two sorts: *in audiendo* (x. 1. 8, and 5. 17-20) and *in legendō* (x. 1-2), the latter being the more important. The interrelations

¹ Good organs of speech and tone of voice, strength of body, and grace of motion are of such power that they frequently gain for their possessor the reputation for *ingenium* (xii. 5. 5). Here *ingenium* seems to mean mental qualities and *natura*, physical. This differentiation is uncommon.

of *lectio* and *imitatio* according to Quintilian are best illustrated by the following diagram:



Imitation, to Quintilian, seems very useful, but with only imitation the student can never surpass his models. He should imitate not one man but the excellencies of all men. He should imitate not words only but all elements of expression.

Tacitus, in his *Dialogus* (ca. 84-85 A.D. or 94-95 A.D.), lays his emphasis in a new place. While Cicero had glorified natural ability and Quintilian had exalted the technical elements, Tacitus, admitting the force of both, lays greatest stress on a combination of talent and practice. Maternus is made to say, "Neque enim tantum arte et scientia, sed longe magis facultate et *usu* eloquentiam contineri" (*Dialogus* xxxiii). In addition he agrees with Cicero that the orator must be a truly educated man (*Dialogus* xxx). His attitude toward imitation is not stated directly, but he recommends in section xxxiii that the student accompany his master to the forum, and there not only see how he pleads his cause but observe the opponent and the effect on the auditors. This is Quintilian's imitation *in audiendo*. From this we may conclude that one model for imitation would be distasteful to Tacitus. Here we have no apparent direct influence on Jonson.

Thus the classical treatises on rhetoric, with the exception of *Ad Herennium*, all follow the classification of Protagoras, insisting that the finished orator must have native ability, knowledge of rhetorical theory, and familiarity through practice. But the treatises on the theory of poetry in classical times did not cleave to Plato's theory of poetic inspiration. They set up in its stead a rhetorical ideal which resulted in the learned content and sophisticated style of the later Greek and Latin poets. The poets were burdened by technique. Their *ingenium* had to be disciplined and governed by *ars*.¹ For example, Horace in his *Ad Pisonem* (ca. 13-8 B.C.) writes in the spirit

¹ E. Norden, *Die antike Kunstprosa* (1898), pp. 182 ff.

of the rhetoricians when he says that *natura* and *ars* are equally needful in poetry:

Natura fieret laudabile carmen an arte
quaesitum est: ego nec studium sine divite vena,
nec rude quid prospic video ingenium [ll. 408-12].

Jonson knew his Horace and quoted from him freely, but he could not have obtained suggestions from him for his analysis, for Horace has no such complete division. Like the *Ad Pisonem* of Horace, the anonymous treatise *De sublimitate*, at one time ascribed to Longinus, is under rhetorical influence, but it comes much nearer to being a genuine discussion of poetic. The author names five essentials to lofty style: the power of forming lofty conceptions (*νοήσεις ἀδρεπήβολον*), inspired passion (*ἐνθουσιαστικὸν πάθος*), figures, phraseology, and composition. The first two are derived from natural genius, the last three from art (viii. 1). The insistence on the emotional basis of poetry, on its quality of inspiration, brings the author closer to Plato, Aristotle, and the true conception of poetic than are any of his fellow-critics of a rhetorical age. But the treatise is far from consistently Platonic. The author believes that, although nature is the basis of lofty conceptions and inspired passion, it frequently needs the curb of art. Nature is good fortune; art, good counsel (i). "Success of never failing is in most cases due to art, the success of high, although not uniform, excellence, to genius; that, therefore, art should ever be brought in to aid nature; where they are reciprocal the result should be perfection."¹ This doctrine is certainly not that of Platonism. Just as certainly it derives from the classical rhetorics.

In the Renaissance the logical distinctions of the classical critics very naturally became blurred. The distinction between rhetoric and poetic became almost lost, rhetoric being mainly interested in stylistic artifice, and poetic becoming rhetorical in its dependence on rules and its tendency to persuade. For example, the threefold analysis of oratorical requirements on the one hand suffered sea-change in its treatment by the Renaissance rhetoricians, and on the other was carried over in whole or in part into the treatises on poetic by the literary critics.

¹ Longinus (pseudo), *On the Sublime* (trans. by A. O. Prickard, Oxford, 1906), XXXVI. 4.

Among the rhetoricians Stephen Hawes in his allegorical didactic *Pastime of Pleasure* (1506) illustrates the tendency to garble classical theory. He conducts Grande Amour to the abode of *Rethoryke*, where the student is instructed as follows:

To understandingy these iiiii. accident:
 Doctryne, perceyveraunce, and exercyse,
 And also thereto is equypolent
 Evermore the perfyt practyse.

Farther on in the poem, he is given additional information:

Than shal he knowe, by perfyte study,
 The memorial arte of rhetoryke defuse
 With exercyse he shal it well augment.¹

Apparently Hawes does not concern himself as to whether natural talent, which he does not mention, or formal rules of art are more important. His analysis is confusing, but at least we may gather that he placed great faith in "doctryne" (*ars*) and "exercyse," or "practyse" (*exercitatio*, or *usus*). In his *Ciceronianus* (1528), Erasmus asserts that the fountain of eloquence is study, art, practice, meditation, sincerity, and native talent.

Pectus opulenter instructum . . . pectus *artis* praeceptionibus, tum multo scribendi dicendique *usu*, diutina *meditatione* praeparatum: & quod est totius negotii caput, *pectus amans ea quae praedicat, odio prosecuens ea quae vituperat*. His omnibus conjunctum oportet esse *naturae* judicium, prudendiam, & consilium, quae praeceptis contineri non possunt.²

He evidently includes imitation, although he deprecates its overuse, as may be seen in a later passage in the same work. The new element of sincerity introduced by Erasmus does not seem to have been popular among later writers. Sir Thomas Elyot does not pretend to teach rhetoric, but he thinks with Cicero that the true orator must be a learned man and a philosopher and deprecates the overemphasis on tropes and figures, which occupy so much space in the later works on rhetoric.³

¹ Reprinted from the edition of 1555, for the Percy Society, London, 1845, pp. 45, 51.

² Erasmus, *Dialogus, cui titulus ciceronianus, sive, de optimo dicendi genere*, in *Opera omnia* (Lugduni Batavorum, 1703), I, 1002 A.

³ *The Boke named The Goverour* (edited from the first ed. of 1531 by H. H. S. Croft, 2 vols., London, 1845), I, 116.

Louis Vives, recommended by Wilson in his translation of Demosthenes as "a Spaniarde, and one notably learned," like Elyot, is closer to the classical doctrine. In his *De ratione dicendi* (1537) he asserts that *ars* can accomplish little without *natura* and *exercitatio*.¹ Thomas Wilson's *Arte of Rhetorique* (1553)² is the earliest³ and best example of classical rhetoric in England. Wilson's sources were Cicero's *De inventione* and *De oratore*, Quintilian, and the *Ad Herennium*, which he quotes believing it to be Cicero's.⁴ At the very beginning of his treatise⁵ he informs his reader "By what meanes Eloquence is Attained":

First needfull it is that hee, which desireth to excell in this gift of Oratorie, and longeth to prove an eloquent man, must naturally have a wit, and an aptnesse thereunto: then must he to his Booke, and learne to bee well stored with knowledge, that he may be able to minister matter for al causes necessarie. The which when he hath got plentifully, he must use much exercise, both in writing, and also in speaking. For though hee have a wit and learning together, yet shall they both little availe without much practise. . . . Many men know the art very well, and be in all points thoroughly grounded and acquainted with the precepts, & yet it is not their hap to prove eloquent. And the reason is, that eloquence it selfe, came not up first by the art, but the arte rather was gathered upon eloquence.⁶

Now, before we use either to write, or speake eloquently, wee must dedicate our myndes wholy, to followe the most wise and learned men, and seeke to fashion as wel their speache and gesturing, as their witte or endyting.

To this purpose and for this use, is the arte compiled together, by the learned and wisemen, that those which are ignorant might judge of the learned, and labour . . . to followe their woorkes accordingly. Againe, the arte helpeth well to dispose and order matters of our owne invention, the which wee may followe as well in speaking as in writing, for though many by nature without art, have proved worthy men, yet is arte a surer guide

¹ *Opera omnia* (8 vols. in 7. Valentiae Edetanorum, 1782-90), II, 156.

² Edited by G. H. Mair, Oxford, 1909, from the ed. of 1560.

³ Leonard Cox's *The Arte or Crafte of Rhethoryke* (edited from the ed. of 1530 by F. I. Carpenter, Chicago, 1899) discusses only *inventio* and is based on Melanchthon. He does not mention *ars*, *natura*, and *exercitatio*.

⁴ I shall present my evidence for this statement in a forthcoming detailed study of the sources of Wilson's *Arte of Rhetorique*.

⁵ Pages 4, 5. In quotations from the English of the period the use of *v* and *u* has been modernized, and the long *s* has been abandoned.

⁶ A direct translation of Cicero *De oratore* i. 32, quoted above.

then nature. . . . Againe, those that have good wittes by Nature, shall better encrease them by arte, and the blunt also shall bee whetted through arte, that want Nature to helpe them forward.

This gives an analysis of five co-ordinate topics: (1) "wit and aptnesse" (*ingenium* or *natura*); (2) "He must to his Booke" (*lectio*); (3) "practice" (*exercitatio*); (4) "Follow the wise men" (*imitatio*); (5) "arte" (*ars*). Wilson seems to have read both Cicero and Quintilian previous to writing this section, but he depends more on Quintilian for his recommendation that the student should imitate the wise men, and that art is a surer guide than nature. Renaissance electicism again seems responsible for his juxtaposition of the latter statement with Cicero's insistence that nature is of greater importance because eloquence was not born of art, but art of eloquence. Not recognizing the logical soundness of the classical division into *natura*, *ars*, and *exercitatio*, Wilson elevates *imitatio* and *lectio*, parts of *exercitatio*, to become co-ordinate with the first three. Apparently the first to depart from the classical precedent in thus making a five-fold division, he gives an example for Jonson to follow in his fivefold division. Furthermore, in Wilson as well as in Jonson, *exercitatio* is taken to mean practice or exercise instead of exercises, or *progymnasmata*.

The dearth of good teachers of rhetoric in the Middle Ages and in the early Renaissance, combined with the later rediscovery of the classic authors, led to an increasing dependence on *imitatio* as an aid to the acquisition of rhetorical skill, especially in the command of style. Petrarch jotted notes of approval in the margin of his Quintilian x. 1. 112; x. 2. 27, where imitation, especially of Cicero, is enjoined.¹ But Petrarch always wrote like himself; Barzizza, Longolius, and Bembo, on the other hand, made a creed of the slavish imitation of the style of Cicero. They reasoned that one could learn to write only by imitation, that one author only could be imitated with profit, that the one should be the best, that the best was Cicero.² Erasmus wrote his *Ciceronianus* (1528) to combat this heresy. But he does not carry his hostility to the abuse so far as to condemn imitation outright. He thinks it a good exercise for young students,

¹ P. de Nolhac, *Pétrarque et l'humanisme* (new ed., Paris, 1907), II, 92.

² Th. Zielinski, *Cicero im Wandel der Jahrhunderte* (3d ed., Leipzig, 1912), pp. 179-86.

if it is not confined to one model. Cicero himself should be imitated, but only when the student has already studied the rules of rhetoric.¹ Erasmus, in other words, corrected a pedagogical exaggeration and showed that imitation was only one means to gain oratorical effectiveness. But the heresy survived and flourished. Sadoleto, in his *De pueris recte instituendis* (ca. 1532), referred the whole rhetorical education of the boy, both for theory and for imitation, to Cicero,² and Ben Jonson would have the inspired poet learn to write verses as the schoolboy learned to write Latin—by imitating one man. Roger Ascham, however, was the most important English Ciceronian. In a letter to John Sturm, in December, 1568, he gives a good example of his theory:

Namque, ut in vitae et morum sic in doctrinae et studiorum ratione omni, longe plus possunt exempla quam praecepta. In illarum vero rerum sive arte, sive facultate, quae sola imitatione perfici videntur, praecepta aut nullum aut perexiguum habent locum, quum exempla isthie vel solitaria plane regnant.³

Imitatio, not *ars*, is to Ascham the royal road to eloquence. In the same letter he asserts as well that the object of imitation should be Cicero, but the manner of imitation should be, not that of Longolius, ridiculed by Erasmus in his *Ciceronianus*, but that of Sturm. According to Sturm imitation should not be limited to words and phrases but should be “a vehement and artistic application of mind.”⁴ This comes from Quintilian. In the section on imitation in the *Schoolmaster* (1570), Ascham develops his theory at greater length. He defends himself against objectors by asserting that Cicero imitated Aristotle for the material of the *De oratore*, and Plato for his dialogue form. Neither of these statements is, of course, true. As to whether one or many should be followed he says, “All, for him that desires to know all.” “But in everie separate kinde of learnyng, and studie by it selfe ye must follow closelie a few, and chieflie some one.”⁵

Not until the seventeenth century did any rhetorical scholar correct these Renaissance vagaries. Combining good judgment with

¹ *Opera omnia*, I, 1024 D.

² Translation by E. T. Campagnac and K. Forbes (Oxford, 1916), p. 98.

³ G. G. Smith, *Elizabethan Critical Essays* (Oxford, 1904), I, 347.

⁴ Spingarn, *Literary Criticism in the Renaissance* (New York, 1899), p. 131.

⁵ Smith, *op. cit.*, I, 22.

sound classical scholarship, the Dutchman Gerardus Joh. Vossius revived the more logical analysis in his *De rhetoricae natura et constitutione, liber* (1621).¹ His analysis is as follows: "Rhetorice quoque tribus comparatur: Natura, quae incipit; arte, quae dirigit; & usu, qui perficit" (VIII). And lest we make the mistake that every Renaissance rhetorician had previously made, of making imitation co-ordinate, he adds: "Porro tribus illis, quae ad artem requiri diximus, nonnulli adjiciunt imitationem: eosque inter magister Herennianus. Verum ea usus, sive exercitationes, pars est: nisi quis arti subjicere malit" (VIII). Vossius also agrees with Cicero and Quintilian in his evaluation of nature, art, and exercise:

Quamquam ad comparandam eloquentiam nihil absque natura ars possit; multum autem absque arte valeat natura: tamen ne iis quidem, qui a natura caeteris sunt feliciores, nedum ingenii mediocribus, negligendam esse artis culturam: cum orator consummatus, nisi ex utroque, produci non possit (IX).

Vossius was at one time in England, and his work may have come to Jonson's eye, but it is evident that Jonson did not profit by it.

The literary critics, as distinct from the rhetoricians, were of two kinds: the simon-pure Platonists, who postulated inspiration as the fount of poetic creation; and the neo-classicists, who constructed their theory of poetry by the square and rule of rhetoric. The inspirational theory is best illustrated by quotations from E. K., Spenser, and Drayton. In the "Argument to the October Eclogue" of the *Shepheards Calender* (1579), E.K. writes as follows:

Poetrie being indeed so worthy and commendable an arte; or rather no arte, but a divine gift and heavenly instinct not to bee gotten by laboure and learning, but adorned with both; and poured into the witte by a certain Ἐρθοντασμὸς and celestial inspiration.

And in the poem Pierce speaks:

O pierlesse Poesye! where is then thy place?
If nor in Princes pallace thou doe sitt,
(And yet is Princes pallace the most fitt,)
Ne brest of baser birth doth thee embrace,
Then make thee winges of thine aspyring wit,
And, whence thou camst, fye backe to heaven apace.

Lodge in his *Defence* (1579) as a Platonist recognized the difference between poetic and rhetoric in his version of the proverb

¹ Hagae, Comites apud Adrianum Vlacq, 1648.

"*Poeta nascitur, Orator fit*: as who should say, Poetrye commeth from above, from a heavenly seate of a glorious God, unto an excellent creature man; an Orator is but made by exercise." He tells how Ennius is said to have become a poet by sleeping on Parnassus and dreaming that he received the soul of Homer into him.¹ Jonson may well have read Lodge for this story, as well as Persius *Prologus* i, which appears to be the source. But Jonson does not believe in becoming a poet by this method. It is too easy. Drayton in his *Epistle to Henry Reynolds* (1627) shows himself in complete agreement as to the inspiration of poetry:

Next *Marlow*, bathed in the *Thespian* springs,
Had in him those brave translunary things
That the first poets had, his raptures were
All ayre and fire, which made his verses cleere;
For that fine madnes still he did retaine,
Which rightly should possesse a Poets braine [ll. 105-10].

The classicists in literary criticism take the very opposite view. Vida's *Art of Poetry* (1520-27) has the genuine rhetorical flavor. He admits that not all have the same ability:

Verum non eadem tamen omnibus esse memento
ingenia [I, 354-55].

But he immediately asserts that cultivation and teaching may overcome even natural disability. Nature is controlled by art:

Saepe tamen cultusque frequens, et cura docentum
imperat ingeniis, naturaque fleetitur arte [I, 362-63].

This is about as far from the Platonic doctrine of poetical inspiration as a critic may get.

Another classicist is the Bohemian Jesuit, Jacob Pontanus, whose *Poeticarum institutionum* (1594),² according to a prefatory note, is based on Aristotle, Plutarch, Horace, Scaliger, Vipernanus, Minturno, Robortelli, Vida, Cicero, and Quintilian. He says in his preface that no one would try to write orations without studying the art of rhetoric, yet people try to write poetry with neither ability nor preparation. He begins his treatise by an exposition of the inspirational theory of poetry but shows more sympathy with the

¹ Smith, *op. cit.*, I, 71.

² Libri tres (Ingolstadii, ex typographia Davidis Sartorii, 1594).

familiar rhetorical point of view. "Ars tanquam certissima dux viam demonstrat: quam si fideliter sequemur, nunquam offendemus" (I, 1). *Natura*, he believes, is the first and most important element, but, to reach perfection, to it must be added *ars*, *labor*, *exercitatio*, and *imitatio*. Imitation is of great importance. The poet should imitate one man. "Unum praecipue tibi deligo, cui te similem esse studeas" (I, 10).

Although Jonson's fivefold analysis evidently does not derive from Pontanus, yet there is evidence that Jonson compiled paragraph 130 with the *Poeticarum institutionum* open on his desk. M. Castelain has shown that Jonson quotes Aristotle and Plato not from the original but from Seneca. Similarly Jonson quoted several other classical authors not from the sources but from Book I of Pontanus. At the beginning of the paragraph Jonson writes: "And these three voices differ, as the thing done, the doing, and the doer; the thing fain'd, the faining, and the fainer; so the *Poeme*, the *Poesy*, and the *Poet*." M. Castelain quotes a similar differentiation from Scaliger, but the following version from Pontanus shows a closer affinity to Jonson: "ut poema, poesis, poeta haec tria differant . . . quasi dicas factum, factio, factor: aut, factum, fictio, fector" (I, 7). Again, "For, whereas all other Arts consist of Doctrine, and Precepts: the *Poet* must bee able by nature, and instinct to powre out the treasure of his mind," is from Cicero *Pro Archia*, quoted by Pontanus as follows: "caeterarum rerum studia, & doctrina & praeceptis constare: poetam natura ipsa valere, & mentis viribus excitari" (I, 1). Here as elsewhere Jonson is not attempting a close translation but is adapting as best serves his turn. Next the story that Virgil licked his verses into shape as a bear is said to lick her cubs, traced by M. Castelain to Donatus, as well as the ascription to Scaliger as to Virgil's method of writing, is in Pontanus, I, 16. As to methods of imitation Jonson says, "Not to imitate servilely, as Horace saith, and catch at vices for virtue." Pontanus quotes Horace to that effect, "Notatuit Horatius. . . . Quod autem vitia tanquam virtutes imitantur" (I, 10). Jonson further says that a poet should cull the excellencies of other poets, digest them, and make them his own as a bee gathers sweets from flowers and makes honey. This idea, which M. Castelain has shown to be originally

from Seneca, is also furnished by Pontanus in the same chapter. Finally, Jonson writes, "For, as Simylus saith in Stobaeus," and quotes two lines of the Greek¹ with the following paraphrase: "Without Art, Nature can neare bee perfect; &, without Nature, Art can clayme no being." Pontanus gives the same Greek text—"Simyli apud Strobaeum"—and the following translation closer than the Greek to Jonson's English:

Sine arte nusquam omnino natura est satis,
Nec ars adempta natura quidquam potest [I, 1].

Other resemblances between Pontanus and Jonson include the doctrine of both that the poet should imitate one man, and the method of both in starting with the Platonic theory of inspiration and then shifting to the rhetorical position of the classicists.

Like Spenser and the Platonists, Sir Philip Sidney has a high opinion of poetic gifts, but primarily he is a classicist: he derives from the Italian critics, who derive from the classical rhetorics. In his *Apologie* (ca. 1583, imp. 1595) he says:

A Poet no industrie can make, if his owne *Genius* bee not carried unto it: and therefore is it an old Proverbe, *Orator fit, Poeta nascitur*. Yet confesse I alwayes that as the firtilest ground must bee manured, so must the highest flying wit have a *Dedalus* to guide him. That *Dedalus*, they say, both in this and in other, hath three wings to beare it selfe up into the ayre of due commendation: that is, Arte, Imitation, and Exercise. But these, neyther artificiall rules nor imitative patternes, we must cumber our selves withall, Exercise indeede wee doe, but that very forebackwardly: for where we should exercise to know, wee exercise as having knowne: and so is our braine delivered of much matter which never was begotten by knowledge.²

This is the familiar rhetorical analysis with new modifications: (1) *genius* (*ingenium*); (2) *arte* (*ars*); (3) *imitation* (*imitatio*); (4) *exercise* (*exercitatio*). Imitation as in the *Ad Herennium* and in the creed of the Ciceronians is co-ordinate instead of a part of exercise. The proportional metaphor of Student is to Training as Field is to Farmer is an echo of Quintilian the rhetorician. Exercise, recommended as a preparation for writing, is of course inherent in rhetoric from its inception.

Between Sidney and Jonson there are no English writers on the art of poetry who give anything like a complete analysis. Most of

¹ *Greek Anthology*, LX, 4.

² Smith, I, 195.

them have a high opinion of natural ability. In his *Short Treatise* (1584), James VI, of Scotland, says, "For gif Nature be nocht the cheif worker in this airt, Reulis whilbe bot a band to Nature . . . : quhair as, gif Nature be cheif, and bent to it, reulis will be ane help and staff to Nature."¹ His "Sonnet Decifring the Perfyte Poete" requires "ane rype ingyne, reasons, wordis, memorie, skilfulnes and figuris, quhilks proceid from Rhetorique." This needs no comment to bring out the rhetorical bent. Nash, both in his own writing and in his *Anatomie of Absurditie* (1589), shows his belief in even the vagaries of natural talent. He makes a perfunctory bow to rhetoric, which he holds "in highest reputation." He then adds, "Endevour to adde unto arte Experience: experience is more profitable voide of arte then arte which hath not experience."² Puttenham likewise thinks little of art and much of natural talent. If the poet use art, by which Puttenham means artificialities, he should conceal it. His attitude is well exemplified from the third book of his *Arte of English Poesie* (1589): "And yet I am not ignorant that there be artes and methods both to speake and to perswade . . . by which the natural is in some sorte relieved . . . I say relieved in his imperfection, but not made more perfit then the natural."³ It is interesting to find the dear enemies, Nash and Harvey, in substantial agreement on one topic at least. Although Harvey thinks more highly of discipline than does Nash, they both rate experience higher than theory: Harvey writes in the fourth of the *Fouer Letters* (1592):

To excell, ther is no way but one: to marry studius Arte to diligent Exercise: but where they must be unmarried, or divorced, geve me rather Exercise without Arte then Arte without Exercise. . . . A world without a Sunne; a Boddy without a Soule; Nature without Arte; Arte without Exercise—sory creatures.⁴

The evidence speaks for itself. Poetic and rhetoric, the two arts of literary communication, were recognized by Plato and Aristotle to be two—the useful art of rhetoric demanding of its practitioner natural aptitude, mastery of theory, and exercise; the fine art of poetry demanding something higher. The Latin literary critics, true to the spirit of their race, minimized the inspirational and

¹ Smith, *op. cit.*, I, 210.

² *Ibid.*, I, 334-35.

³ *Ibid.*, II, 190.

⁴ *Ibid.*, II, 236.

amplified the rhetorical elements in their practice and theory of poetry. The Middle Ages, cut off from contact with classical antiquity, was mentally chained by grammar, logic, and rhetoric, the *artes* of the trivium. Hawes is an illustration. Then, when the critics of the Renaissance were first quickened into intellectual life, it was by their heritage not from Greece but from Rome. Thus the battle between the *autores* and the *artes* which ensued was a struggle after all between two rhetorical points of view. The *autores* furnished models to be imitated; the *artes* formulated frigid rules to be followed. This struggle is exemplified by the disputes which culminated in *Ciceronianus*. The next two stimuli came from Greece. Aristotle's *Poetics* was set up as a body of rules by the Italian critics, who, rigid in their rhetorical shackles, ignored his sane admission that a poet must be gifted by nature or have a strain of madness in him. The result was the classicism of Vida, Sidney, Pontanus, and Jonson. The second stimulus was Platonism, insisting that the poet must be inspired from heaven and that nothing else really matters. This romantic idea was seized upon by Spenser, E. K., and Drayton. The effect of these influences has been shown. Saturated as Jonson was with Latin culture, with which his mind was so closely sympathetic, his theories of poetry were naturally those of the Italian classicists. But classicist though he was, like Pontanus he conjoins the Platonic doctrine of inspiration to the rhetorical analysis of the orator and calls the incongruous result the "Requirements of the Poet."

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"TO PRUNE" AND "TO PRIME"

The *NED* leaves the derivation of *prune*¹, used of a bird trimming, "preening," its feathers with its beak, and of *prune*², to lop trees, etc., undecided. Both have the earlier forms *pruin*, *proin*. In the *Modern Language Review*, January, 1911, the late Professor Skeat showed that *prune*¹, earlier *proin*, is OF *poroindre* (Godef.), intensive of *oindre*, "to anoint," while *prune*² represents an unrecorded OF **poroignier*, intensive of *rogner*, to clip, VL **ROTUNDIARE*. With regard to *prune*¹ I may point out that the following passage is conclusive as to the etymology and original sense of *prune*¹: "She [the hawk] *proynith* when she fetchith oyle with her beke . . . and anoyntith hir fete & hir federis" (Book of St. Alban's).

The same book contains further statements to the same effect. With regard to *prune*² I may say that I suggested the Skeat etymology to the late Sir James Murray when he sent me the *NED* proofs, pointing out that the OF forms *prooignier*, *proignier*, *progner* were parallel to those of *rogner*. But Sir James thought that it involved "a somewhat violent treatment of the first syllable." However, *proffer*, OF *porofrir*, intensive of *offrir*, is, as Skeat points out, a precisely similar contraction.

The *NED* recognizes as verbs *prime*¹, to load (a ship), recorded for 1523 (Gavin Douglas), and regards to *prime* a gun as the same word; *prime*², to enter on first phase, etc.; *prime*³ (dial.), to prune trees; *prime*⁴, to leap (of a fish). Omitting *prime*², I wish to suggest that to *prime* a gun is not identical with *prime*¹, though there may have been association between them, e.g., as when we say that a man is *primed* with information or liquor. In the sense of loading a ship *prime* may be connected with nautical *primage*, allowance made to the master of a ship, Med.L. **PRIMAGIUM**. The analogy of *keelage*, *bottomry*, suggests that *primage* may be connected with obs. It. *primo* (*sc. legno*), keel (Jal, *Glossaire nautique*). The *NED* thinks that *prime*³, to prune, may be a corruption of *prune*², *proin* (for the vowel cf. *rile* for *roil*). The following extracts

seem to show that this is true of *priming* a gun, an operation which may, I imagine, have originally consisted in clearing the touchhole. The passages are not quite so early as the first *NED* record for the word (1598), but they have the advantage of being the actual words of men "on the spot," while the earlier *NED* record is from a theoretical treatise: "Rawlins having *proined* the tuck-hole, James Roe gave fire to one of the pieces" (Purchas, *Pilgrims*, VI, 168, in Maclehose's edition, Glasgow, 1905). "Thirty muskets ready laden and *pruned* . . . sixty powder-pots matched and *pruned* . . . eight pieces of ordnance ready *pruned*" (*ibid.*, X, 337).

It seems possible that *prime*, in this sense, may be for **prine* (*proin*), or that it originated as a misprint of *prune*. If this is so, *prime*¹ in the *NED* requires dividing into two separate words.

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REVIEWS AND NOTICES

The Mystic Vision in the Grail Legend and in the Divine Comedy.

By LIZETTE ANDREWS FISHER. New York: Columbia University Press, 1917. Pp. x and 148.

"The quest of the Holy Grail," said Hagen, "is one of the most alluring undertakings in the entire field of philology." One readily understands why Miss Fisher should have succumbed to the spell (see p. 31). But it is also one of the most difficult, and a glance at the present dissertation shows that the "chance of finding the master clew" (if such a clew really exists) is not as close at hand as Miss Fisher seems to think. The new quester—we borrow the symbolism which she herself suggests—has zeal and deals with an interesting point, namely, the doctrine of transubstantiation in relation to the two works she discusses, but whether she has brought the problem nearer to a solution we leave it to the reader of this review to judge. Not content with expounding the mystic vision in the Grail, a question certainly worthy of an orderly and scholarly discussion on the basis of a critical examination of the extant *texts*, Miss Fisher extends her theory to the *Divine Comedy*, to be sure "without any undue desire for classification" (p. 28), yet also without any seeming misgiving as to the possibility of adequately treating two such problems in the course of a brief study.

The book has an introduction (pp. 1-7), a chapter on "Transubstantiation in History, Theology, and Devotion [?]" (pp. 8-29), a chapter on the "Grail" (pp. 30-85), a chapter on the "Divine Comedy" (pp. 86-117), several appendices, consisting mainly of citations from mediaeval Latin writers (pp. 118-39), a bibliography of "useful" books¹ (pp. 140-45), and an index (pp. 146-48). It contains five full-page illustrations, the most interesting being those of the patens of Imola and St. Denis, though where there is so much adornment one misses the finely executed miniature of the eucharistic Grail to be found in MS 120 of the Bibliothèque Nationale. The binding is in the usual attractive manner of the Columbia Studies in English and Comparative Literature. Despite the Romance subject, indebtedness to the Romance faculty at Columbia is nowhere expressed.

Miss Fisher sees in the developed Grail legend a combination of the story of Joseph of Arimathea and a quest of Celtic origin. She affirms (p. 32) that "the motive for the combination of two such elements, as far from each

¹ *DuCange's Dictionary* heads the list!

other in character as in origin, has never been adequately explained." And her thesis is that "Robert de Borron, or a writer in Latin prose whose work was adapted to romantic purposes by de Borron, desiring to set forth the doctrine of transubstantiation and to establish certain local claims, combined the story of the quest with that of Joseph of Arimathea, derived from Christian legend." The first statement is not consistent with the facts: all those who have held to the theory of Celtic origin have seen in the Christianization of the Grail a part of a general mediaeval movement in which not only pagan customs but also pagan beliefs and myths were given a Christian character. Josaphat is a Christianization of the Buddha: why? because it aided the proselyting spirit of the age so to consider him. Likewise the Grail, whether blood-vessel or dish of plenty, given its supernatural character, was identified by the relic-loving church with the receptacle of Christ's blood, the cup of the Last Supper, and the Eucharist. See Nutt, *Legend*, p. 255; Heinzel, *Gralromane*, p. 178; Martin, *Parzival*, II, p. L; Nitze, *PMLA*, XXIV; Brown, *Modern Philology*, XIV, 65. As for the second statement or the thesis proper, its validity would hinge on showing (1) that it was Robert or his supposed Latin source who first gave the Grail its Christian character, and (2) that the *Metrical Joseph* reveals a definite interest in the doctrine of transubstantiation. To these, other considerations are attached which will be brought out below.

Obviously, neither of the foregoing points can be solved without a detailed examination of the Grail texts involved. This Miss Fisher nowhere gives. Not only does she ignore the knotty problem of the authenticity of Robert's extant text, but in a rambling discussion (p. 44) of the poet's personality Bédier comes in for a view which he would probably disavow, while Suchier's theory that Robert was a knight (*ZrP*, XVI; cf. Foerster, *Wtb*, p. 173*; "Da R. Ritter war, kein Geistlicher") is not even adduced. In addition, the *Didot-Perceval* is again listed as the prose rendering of a lost romance of Robert's, regardless of the excellent arguments to the contrary by Sommer in *Beihefte* 17 and by Bruce, *Romanic Review*, IV, 462; the *Parzival* is referred to in Bartsch's, not the standard Martin edition; no mention is made of Loth's translation, now in the second edition, of the *Peredur*, which is said to be preserved" in a MS" (there are eleven); the *Sir Percyvall* is rated as "the most authentic form of the original Celtic tale" on the basis of a view expressed in 1883; no adequate idea is given of the *Perlesvaus*; no attention is paid to the cyclic redactions, on which so much has been written by Wechsler, Sommer, Brugger, Bruce, and others, and Crestien's *Conte del graal* figures only in the Potvin text and not in the now revised reprint of B.N.f. 794 by Baist.

Thus, it is not surprising that the reader gets no consistent account of the characteristics of the Grail as found in Crestien and in Robert. Yet it is quite clear that some such discussion must precede any hypothesis that

Robert or the author of his source is the person who Christianized the Grail, for Brown maintains in his recent study (*op. cit.*, p. 401) that "so far as we can see, the entire connection of the Grail with the eucharistic feast and its later identification with the cup of the Last Supper sprang from these few lines of Chrétien (vss. 6379-93)," while Foerster (*Wtb.*, p. 173*, not mentioned by Miss Fisher) is just as certain that "wie die Sachen liegen, kann Roberts Josef Kristians *livre* gewesen sein," and (p. 158*) "er ist der älteste, einfachste und kürzeste unter den Graltexten . . . [p. 178*] ob Abendmahlsschüssel oder Blutschüssel, bei Josef ist beides vereint." In a recent article on the word *graal* (*Modern Philology*, XIII, 681) the question of Christianization was left in abeyance until we shall have a critical edition of the *Joseph* and the complete variants of the Grail passages in Crestien's poem. Until then no one will be able to say with any approach to accuracy who was first responsible for the Christian concept of the Grail.

As for the doctrine of transubstantiation, Miss Fisher gives an adequate, if not complete, account of its history. At the same time, "Paschasius, a monk of Corbey" (p. 15) is hardly an apt appellation of Radbert, surnamed Paschasius,¹ the famous Benedictine of Corbie; his important treatise (*De corpore et sanguine Christi*) is not named; the account of Berengar should have been fuller; see Gröber, *Gr.*, II, 1, 226; Hildebert of Lavardin, also known as Hildebert of Tours, in many ways the most important person treated, has no date, his connection with Brittany is not mentioned, nor does the bibliography give Dieudonné's book on him (Paris, 1898); the treatment of Hugh of St. Victor seems scanty, especially since the summary on page 26 would lead the unwary to infer that he was one of the "mystics of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries," etc. But, above all, the relation of transubstantiation to the Grail texts needs to be set in a clearer light if the theory is to carry conviction.

As it is, Miss Fisher points out the importance of the Lateran Council in 1215 for the establishment of this doctrine—and, generally speaking, 1215 is the date of the great florescence of the Grail story; on pages 58 ff. she discusses with considerable acumen the varying concept of the word "chalice," and she wisely stresses the importance of Robert's "secret words" (pp. 53 ff.). But she fails to note Heinzel's reference (*op. cit.*, p. 89) to "die ganze Auffassung des Gralcults als einer Art Messopfer mit Transubstantiation und Communion," the idea that any Christian writer would necessarily borrow this element, ultimately, from Latin mediaeval literature (Birch-Hirschfeld, *Sage*, p. 221), and, particularly, that it is always possible that the significant passage in Robert was interpolated into the second redaction (Heinzel, *loc. cit.*). Thus, the facts, as far as we know them, are these: Although the *Perlesvaus* in one place represents the Grail as "all in flesh," and in another, not mentioned by Miss Fisher, as in the shape of a

¹ The full name does not occur until p. 76.

"chalice,"¹ this romance clings to the view that the holy vessel is a blood relic; and it is not certain, to use Heinzel's words, "ob der Verfasser darunter die Abendmahlsschüssel verstand." Crestien gives two rather different accounts of the *graal*, the first of which is in distinctly pagan surroundings (cf. Nitze, *Elliott Studies*, I), the second apparently much Christianized (cf. Brown, *loc. cit.*). Finally, Robert's text, granting for the sake of argument that it is not a reworking, simply compares the Grail service with the mass but does not identify them (*Modern Philology*, IX, 319).

In short, the process of Christianization is gradual, and transubstantiation, as pointed out by Heinzel, is an incident in the process, and not, in our opinion, the prime motive.

But Miss Fisher argues that in combining the "Celtic tale" with the legend of Joseph of Arimathea Robert also had the motive of establishing "certain local claims." These relate, of course, to the well-known association of the Grail story with Glastonbury Abbey. In settling these claims, however, on Robert, Miss Fisher is oblivious of the literature on this subject (Zarncke, *Paul u. Braunes Beiträge*, III, 317; Baist, *ZrP*, XIX, 320, and *Prorektoratsrede*, p. 15; Nitze, *Modern Philology*, I, 247; Lot, *Mélanges d'histoire bretonne*, pp. 267 ff.; Weston, *Quest of the Holy Grail*, p. 61; and Brugger, *ZFSL*, XXXI, 169, note).² These references would have shown that the *Perlesvaus* had a greater share than the *Joseph* in establishing the Glastonbury connection. The entire episode of Arthur's visit to the Chapel of St. Austin, with which the *Perlesvaus* begins, is found in Johannis Glastoniensis and not merely the excerpt given by Miss Fisher in Appendix VI; and the same episode is also used in the interesting *Histoire de Foulke Fitz-Warin* (ed. Michel, p. 110). Had Miss Fisher fixed upon the *Perlesvaus*, with its strongly allegorizing tendency, and the historical connection of Glastonbury and Fécamp, which she mentions but does not develop (p. 53), instead of Robert, we believe she would have seen the Grail development in a clearer and truer perspective.

Thus, while Robert's *Joseph* is of great importance, a proper understanding of it and the other Grail texts rests on a first-hand knowledge of the material they contain and the scholarly discussion with regard to them. To fall short of this ideal serves only to confuse a problem long recognized as one of the most puzzling in all literature.

With regard to the *Divine Comedy*, Miss Fisher's thesis is that Beatrice on her appearance in the earthly paradise symbolizes the Eucharist, and that the procession of the earthly paradise is modeled on the *Corpus Christi*

¹ See Evans' translation, II, 112. Gietmann, *Ein Gralbuch*, gives a very useful exposition of the allegory in the *Perlesvaus*.

² Baist thinks that the original *Perlesvaus* was also the source of Robert; compare the list of views given in *Modern Philology*, XIII, 682, n. 3. On all this see now "The Glastonbury Passages in the *Perlesvaus*," *North Carolina Studies in Philology*, XV (1918), 7 ff.

procession. Miss Fisher admits (p. 107) that "this whole conception of the mystic procession, and especially that of the place of Beatrice in it, is disturbing, almost shocking, at first presentation." It is furthermore untenable.

What Beatrice symbolizes we may learn with complete assurance from the last chapter of the *De Monarchia*—perhaps the most important passage in all Dante for the general understanding of his view of life:

Duos igitur fines Providentia illa inenarrabilis homini proposuit intendendos; beatitudinem scilicet huius vitae, quae in operatione propriae virtutis consistit, et per terrestrem Paradisum figuratur; et beatitudinem vitae aeternae, quae consistit in fruitione divini aspectus ad quam propria virtus ascendere non potest, nisi lumine divino adiuta, quae per Paradisum coelestem intelligi datur.

Ad has quidem beatitudines, velut ad diversas conclusiones, per diversa media venire oportet. Nam ad primam per philosophica documenta venimus, dummodo illa sequamur, secundum virtutes morales et intellectuales operando. Ad secundam vero per documenta spiritualia, quae humanam rationem transcendent, dummodo illa sequamur secundum virtutes theologicas operando, Fidem, Spem scilicet et Caritatem. Has igitur conclusiones et media (licet ostensa sint nobis haec ab humana ratione, quae per philosophos tota nobis innotuit; haec a Spiritu Sancto, qui per Prophetas et Hagiographos, qui per coaeternum sibi Dei Filium Iesum Christum, et per eius discipulos, supernaturalem veritatem ac nobis necessariam revelavit) humana cupiditas postergaret, nisi homines tamquam equi, sua bestialitate vagantes, in camo et freno compescerentur in via.

Later in the same chapter (line 78) the word *revelata* is used to replace the two words *documenta spiritualia*.

Just as Virgil symbolizes the *philosophica documenta* by which we are guided to the lesser blessedness, symbolized by the earthly paradise, so Beatrice symbolizes the *documenta spiritualia* or *revelata* by which we are guided to the supreme blessedness, symbolized by the heavenly paradise.

And the words *haec a Spiritu Sancto . . . revelari* convey perfectly the essential symbolism of the procession in the earthly paradise. Divine truth is revealed through the Holy Spirit, the sacred writers, Christ, and his disciples. The persons of Dante's procession are the candlesticks, which represent the Holy Spirit; the elders, representing Holy Writ; the Griffin, representing Christ; the four creatures, representing the evangelists; and the virtues, whose relation to the scheme of blessedness is sufficiently defined by Dante within the passage quoted.

Quo vero, illa falsa. Miss Fisher's arguments are faulty both in process and in detail.

Her general reasoning as to the resemblance of Dante's pageant to the Corpus Christi procession is singularly weak; for she offers no satisfactory evidence to indicate that Dante ever saw a Corpus Christi procession and no satisfactory evidence as to the character of early Italian Corpus Christi processions. The Corpus Christi procession was authorized in 1311 by the

council of Vienne. As to its earlier existence, Miss Fisher (p. 95) reports only an unverified statement by Martène (1763-64) that "contemporary books of ritual show that the procession followed very closely on the institution of the festival," and *a priori* opinions expressed by Catalani (1738-39). For her description of Corpus Christi processions she relies on Martène, on Picart (1733-39), and on Kirchmaier's account (1570) of a procession in the England of his day; and she asserts other traits (p. 92) for which she cites no authority. Ritual processions of various sorts were common enough in the Middle Ages; and the establishment of Miss Fisher's thesis would have required her to show that the procession of the earthly paradise corresponded with early Italian Corpus Christi processions in their specifically differentiated character; but this is quite beyond her power.

Miss Fisher makes much of the fact that the Bull of Urban, by which the festival of Corpus Christi was established, mentions the rejoicing of Faith, Hope, and Charity in a manner suggesting the dance of these virtues in Dante. But if one reads the whole passage (p. 94) from the Bull the resemblance loses its distinctness:

Tunc enim omnium corda et vota, ora et labia, hymnos persolvant laetitiae salutaris; tunc psallat fides; spes tripudiet; exultet charitas; devotio plaudat; jubilat chorus; puritas jucundetur. Tunc singuli, alacri animo, pronaque voluntate convenientia sua studia laudabiliter exequendo, tanti festi solemnitatem celebrantes.

And Dante, it may be remarked, nowhere mentions either Urban or the Corpus Christi festival.

Miss Fisher gives no evidence of familiarity with the bibliography of the *Purgatorio* beyond references to Vossler, Symonds, and Moore—an omission that would go far in itself to discredit her work. She has, however, found mention of different theories as to the symbolism of Beatrice (p. 101):

Why, for example, is Beatrice the central figure? It has been said that she here personifies revelation, or the authority of the church, or the ideal papacy. It is never safe, of course, to claim a single, exclusive meaning for any part of Dante's allegory, and Beatrice may figure all of these, but not one of them accounts for her sudden descent into the midst of such a procession. In any of these characters her fitting place would be within the chariot at its first appearance, but Dante becomes aware of her presence only after certain ceremonies of ritual significance.

It is never safe to assume vagueness in the mind of Dante; and it is eminently fitting that the symbol of revelation should appear after ceremonies of ritual significance.

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Ossian en France. Par P. VAN TIEGHEM. (Bibliothèque de littérature comparée.) Paris: F. Rieder & Cie., 1917. Tome Premier, pp. 441. Tome Second, pp. 544.

Dr. Van Tieghem's dissertation, *Ossian en France*, is an excellent example of the type of comparative literary study which has recently met with such favor at the hands of scholars in France. The author, whose *Mouvement romantique* appeared in 1912, is a ripe scholar, and his present work, prepared under the direction of Fernand Baldensperger and with the counsel of Gustave Lanson, admirably fulfills its avowed purpose of describing "l'histoire du succès et de l'influence d'*Ossian en France*, depuis les premières traductions des *Fragments* publiés par Macpherson jusqu'à nos jours." *Ossian en France* is the most complete study yet made of the Ossianic vogue in any European country. For the influence of *Ossian* upon English literature, there is nothing at all comparable to it.

By examining a host of reviews and minor publications, as well as the works of professional critics, scholars, and poets, the author has traveled the only sure and safe road to a just estimate of the attitude of the French spirit toward the supposed ancient Celtic epic and its imitators. In his effort to measure public interest in *Ossian* and Ossianic characters he has even extended his researches to 640 catalogues of private libraries, to various inventories, and to baptismal registers. As regards the history of *Ossian* after its introduction to French readers, the scope and thoroughness of the investigation is evidenced by adequate documentation. Works referred to by short titles are enumerated in a classified bibliography of forty pages at the end of the second volume. Among the important editions of *Ossian* might well be mentioned L. Jiriczek's *James Macpherson's Fragments of Ancient Poetry* (1760): *In diplomatischen Neudruck mit den Lesarten der Umarbeitungen* (Anglistische Forschungen 47), Carl Winter, Heidelberg, 1915. The typography of *Ossian en France* is excellent, and misprints are rare. The index unfortunately includes only names of persons and anonymous works.

Dr. Van Tieghem's method of presentation is at first chronological, but in studying the period of maximum enthusiasm he follows the more illuminating classification by categories, and he finally traces in parallel lines the facts which mark the decadence of interest. Turgot, Suard, Diderot, the mysterious critic of the *Journal des Savants* for 1764, Romantic notions regarding bards, the confusion between Scandinavians and Celts, Northern Antiquities, Anglomania, Original Genius, the Oriental Style, Nature Poetry, Blair, Cesaretti, Wertherism, Le Tourneur, La Harpe, Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, Evan Evans, Gray, Baour-Lormian, the *Ossian* of Hill-Smith, Napoleon, *Ossian* in the *Variétés Littéraires*, Ossianic romances, operas, and pictures, Charles Nodier, Obermann, *Ossian* and Stendal, Chateaubriand, Mme de

Stael, parodies on Ossian, Lamartine, the "Christian Ossian," *Ossian* and Scott, *Ossian* and the Encyclopedists, French pilgrimages to the Highlands, Leconte de Lisle, La Villemarqué, Celtomaniacs, Renan, contemporary Celtic scholarship—these and many other persons and matters are discussed either because they throw light directly on the subject under discussion or because they acted as intermediaries between Ossianism and other literary fashions.

Although the streams that fed the great current of Romanticism are too multitudinous to be traced to any one fountainhead, the learned origin of much eighteenth-century criticism cannot be denied. The so-called Return to Nature has been recently shown to owe much to discussions of a purely philosophical character (cf. C. A. Moore [University of North Carolina], *Studies in Philol.*, XIV [1917], 243 ff.), and no account of the Romantic interest in ballads and epics should neglect the early scholarly theories regarding primitive society and the origin of language and of poetry. The new Romantic structure rose upon a foundation quarried from the ancient classics, and *Ossian* looks back to Homer for its justification. Theories such as those set forth in Thomas Blackwell's *Enquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer* (1735) (cf. *Oss. en Fr.*, I, 245), in Robert Wood's *Essay on the Original Genius of Homer* (1769), as well as in Robert Lowth's *De sacra poesi Hebraeorum piaelectiones* (1753) (cf. *Oss. en Fr.*, I, 203), did much toward establishing in Europe a critical faith in what Gibbon calls "the pleasing supposition that Fingal lived and that Ossian sang." *Ossian* was admirable because it illustrated even better than Homer the current theories regarding the infancy of the human race and the rhapsodies of the primitive bard unspoiled by civilization. Dr. Van Tieghem touches upon critical estimates reflecting theories such as those indicated above, but it is to be wished that in a dissertation of such wide scope as his the learned beginnings of Ossianic criticism had been treated more fully and consecutively. Suggestive observations on the influence of Homeric scholarship on literary criticism during the eighteenth century are to be found in Richard Volkmann's *Geschichte und Kritik der Wolfschen Prolegomena zu Homer* (Leipzig, 1874), pp. 1 ff., and in Georg Finsler's *Homer in der Neuzeit von Dante bis Goethe* (Leipzig, 1912), s.v. "Ossian."

Prefixed to the first book of *Ossian en France* is an Introduction of ninety-two pages designed to give "une fois pour toutes et d'avance, tous les renseignements sur les poèmes ossianiques nécessaires pour comprendre de quelle oeuvre on raconte ici la fortune en France." This Introduction is of prime importance, because it is, as the author declares, "destinée à rendre le reste intelligible," and, since Dr. Van Tieghem has been forced to survey "de seconde main" a field full of pitfalls even for the initiated, it is permissible to offer a few suggestions regarding the sources and content of this survey of Ossianic literature.

Page 8. Dr. Van Tieghem asserts that "l'Irlande et les montagnes de l'Ecosse ont été habitées de temps immémorial par des populations qui parlaient et qui ont parlé jusqu'à nos jours un idiome celtique appelé le *gaélique*." As to the language of the most ancient inhabitants of the north of Scotland, we know too little to justify dogmatism (cf. T. Rice Holmes, *Ancient Britain and the Invasions of Julius Caesar* [Oxford, 1907], pp. 409 ff.). An oft-demanded explanation of the localization in Scotland of an epic cycle admitted to have originated in Ireland would be furnished by the statement that, although intercourse between the two countries may go back to the second century after Christ, the chief influx of Irish-speaking population into the district now included by Argyleshire and the neighboring territory took place about A.D. 500, and that constant communication between Ulster and the north of Scotland lasted for centuries afterward (cf. Macbain, "Excursus" to W. F. Skene's *The Highlanders of Scotland* [Stirling, 1902], pp. 385 ff.). The language of the earliest Scottish manuscript of Ossianic poems, dating from the beginning of the sixteenth century, is scarcely distinguishable from late Middle Irish (Stern, *Ztsch. für celt. Phil.*, I [1896-97], 296). These facts explain how the Gaels of Scotland came to inherit the traditions of the sister-island.

The authority for the definition of the OI *scél* (pl. *scéla*, *u*) should be page 320 or page 349 of Volume I of D'Arbois' *Cours* instead of page 46, where no mention is made of the word. According to Dr. Van Tieghem the *scéla* were "chants," "poèmes," sung to the accompaniment of the harp. Though Irish literature, especially during the later period, furnishes numerous examples of *scéla* in verse, by far the larger proportion of those preserved from the earlier period are narratives in prose or in prose interspersed with lyrical or lyrico-narrative passages. The verse portions *may* have been sung or chanted to the accompaniment of some musical instrument. The oldest Irish form of the word usually translated "harp" is *crott* (s.v., Meyer, *Contributions to Irish Lexicography*), the dative form of which occurs in the eighth-century Würzburg glosses (D'Arbois, *Cours*, I, 56); Dr. Van Tieghem gives *crotta*. The form *cruith*, given by the author as Irish, is a late formation.

Dr. Van Tieghem's broad generalizations regarding the ancient Irish *bárd* and *file* require modification, especially in view of the common misapprehension regarding the position of the former. In early Goidelic literature it is the *file*, not the *bárd*, who figures prominently as a poet and man of letters. Bards are mentioned several times by early classical authorities on the Gauls, and the word *bairtni* ("bardic compositions") is found in Irish before the end of the ninth century. In early Ireland the bard seems clearly to have been "eine niedriger stehende Art von Dichtern" more or less despised by the learned *file* (Windisch, *Ir. T.*, Extraband, p. xlvi). According to the *Senchus Mór*, or Ancient Laws of Ireland, the *báird* neither learn nor teach, therefore the bard's honor price is only half that of the *file*. Another

passage in the same document, quoted from another manuscript in O'Donovan's Supplement to O'Reilly's Irish *Dictionary*, defines *bárd* as "a man without any law of learning except his own intellect," a designation which, originally intended as derogatory, might well have been mistaken by later writers as evidence that the early Celtic *bárd* was a "nature-poet," such as Homer was imagined to have been (cf. D'Arbois, *Cours*, I, 48, 73). In historic times the Irish *báird* flourished most abundantly from the thirteenth to the seventeenth century. These vagrant minstrels were everywhere welcome among the Irish population, and by singing the glories of the past so fed the national antipathy to English rule that it became necessary to pass numerous laws for their suppression (E. Hull, *Text Book of Irish Literature*, I [Dublin, 1906], 198 f.). A similar situation appears to have existed in Wales, as every student of the sources of Gray's *Bard* knows. In Ireland, in Wales, and in the Highlands the bard became a romantic figure, at least in part, because he represented a lost cause. The Romantic conception of the Celtic bard was doubtless fostered also by the uncritical use of suspicious Welsh evidence furnished by Edward Williams (Iolo Morganwg) and those of his ilk (cf. Dottin, *La Relig. des Celtes* [Paris, 1908], p. 10).

Page 10. The so-called Mythological Cycle of early Irish literature, which Dr. Van Tieghem, following the traditional view, calls "le plus ancien," is really a scholarly patchwork composed of a modicum of early myth imbedded in a mass of learned pseudo-history invented by professional antiquarians after the formation of the kernel of the Ulster and Ossianic cycles.

To the list of authorities who have opposed Zimmer's theory that the Ossianic cycle did not take shape until after the Scandinavian invasion (795) should be added the observation that the German scholar's views are now entirely discredited. The matter has been at last settled by John MacNeil (*Duanaire Finn*, [I.T.S.] [1904] [London, 1908], pp. xxiv ff.) and by Kuno Meyer in the introduction to his *Fianaigecht* (*R.I.A.*, *Todd Lect. Ser.*, XVI [1910]), to neither of which Dr. Van Tieghem refers. The author also fails to note that there is reason to believe that *MacCumaill*, the usual form of Finn's patronymic, was originally *MacUmaill* (Meyer, *op. cit.*, p. xxi). For a proper understanding of the origins from which the Romantic conception of Finn's warrior band arose it is important to add that the term *fiann* at first signified "a driving, pursuing, hunting," that it was later used as a common noun meaning "a band of warriors on the warpath," and that only at long length did it become a proper noun applied specifically to Finn's company of hunters and fighters (cf. Meyer, *op. cit.*, pp. v ff.). The name "Fenians" seems to be a late eighteenth-century formation without historical justification. There is abundant evidence that Finn's was only one of many *fianna* existing in ancient Ireland, and MacNeil, in order to account for the puzzling lack of early manuscript evidence for the existence of the Ossianic

cycle, has constructed an ingenious and illuminating, though apparently not yet fully accepted, theory that the epic grew out of feud between the *fianna* of the older subject races of Leinster and Connacht, and that hence it was late in finding favor with the dominant aristocracy who compiled and recorded the national tradition. The earliest preserved story about Finn dates from the eighth or perhaps the seventh century, but most of the manuscript accounts are of a much later time. Nothing that Dr. Van Tieghem could have included in his Introduction would have been more instructive than this view, which for the first time places the Ossianic *scéla* on the same footing as other popular epics and explains how accounts of merely local events developed into a national cycle.

Page 11. The list of references to Ossianic material in England prior to the time of Macpherson might be considerably extended. See *Report of the Committee of the Highland Society of Scotland* (1805), pp. 18 f., 21, note; Croker, *Popular Songs of Ireland* (London, 1839), p. 54; Saunders, *Life and Letters of James Macpherson* (London, 1894), pp. 102 ff.; Stern, *Ztsch. für vergl. Littgesch.*, N.S., VIII (1895), pp. 143 f. Information regarding Finn was also accessible in Lynch's *Cambrensis Eversus*, published at St. Malo in 1662 (see ed. of 1848, I, 485); in O'Flaherty's *Ogygia* (London, 1677) (see the Eng. trans. of 1793, I, 217; II, 246); and in Keating's *Foras feasa ar Éirinn* (c. 1634), of which there appeared in 1723 a partial English translation by Dermod O'Connor, said to have been reprinted several times during the eighteenth century. A second edition, in 1726, is referred to by Best (*Bibliog.*, p. 255). It is O'Flaherty and Keating whose work Macpherson attacks with such "incroyable impudence" (*Oss. en Fr.*, I, 88). For an account of other early books dealing with the Gaels see Victor Tourneur, *Esquisse d'une histoire des études celtiques* (Liège, 1905), pp. 72 ff.

Page 12. Alfred Nutt, upon whose work Dr. Van Tieghem leans rather heavily both here and elsewhere, cannot be regarded as the best authority in matters touching the date of early Irish documents. The investigations of Meyer (*op. cit.*, pp. xvi ff.) prove that as early as the seventh century after Christ heroic tradition had begun to accumulate around the name of Finn, and that by means of linguistic criteria a continuous stream of Ossianic tradition can be traced in Ireland from the seventh to the fourteenth century. Much Ossianic material is contained in manuscripts dating from the nineteenth century, though most of the stories there found are included also in earlier collections. For *Lebor na huidre* read *Lebor na hUidre*.

Page 13. The account of the Father-and-Son Combat which is found in the ancient Irish *Aided Ainfir Aife*, and which in some form furnished the suggestion for Macpherson's *Carthon* (l'un des plus célèbres des petits poèmes: *Oss. en Fr.*, I, 33), occurs not only in the fourteenth-century *Yellow Book of Lecan* (mentioned by Dr. Van Tieghem) but also in the sixteenth-century MS, H.3.17 (T.C.D.). Editions and translations not referred to by Dr. Van

Tieghem are accessible in *Eriu*, I, 113 ff., 123 ff. The Irish story belongs to the Ulster cycle, but a ninth-century burlesque version in which Finn and Oisín are the chief figures was published by Meyer (*op. cit.*, pp. 24 ff.). Although the Ossianic poem cannot have been the source of Macpherson's *Carthon*, it is important as proving that Macpherson was not the first to connect with Ossian material usually associated with the Ulster cycle.

The longest Ossianic document yet discovered, the *Acallamh na Senbrach* ("Colloquy of the Old Men"), which Dr. Van Tieghem knows only through the Lismore version (*Oss. en Fr.*, I, 68), is found in at least four respectable manuscripts, from which it has been excellently edited by Whitley Stokes (*Ir. T.*, IV, Heft 1 [1900]). The compilation dates probably from the end of the thirteenth or the first half of the fourteenth century (Stern, *Ztsch. für cell. Phil.*, III, 614; cf. *Mod. Phil.*, XII [1915], 596, n. 3). A newly unearthed version discovered in the Royal Irish Academy is to be edited for the Irish Texts Society. If an adequate notion of the extent of early Irish and Scottish epic literature is to be reached, D'Arbois' *Catalogue*, upon which Dr. Van Tieghem depends so largely throughout his Introduction, must be supplemented by more recent accounts of manuscript finds. Although still useful, the book, it should be recalled, was compiled in 1882 and largely from second-hand sources. For additional information on Irish and Scottish Gaelic manuscripts see especially Donald Mackinnon, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Gaelic Manuscripts in Scotland*, Edinburgh, 1912; S. H. O'Grady, *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts* (in the British Museum), London (Unfinished); and the addenda and corrigenda to D'Arbois' *Catalogue*, enumerated by Best, whose *Bibliography of Irish Philology and Printed Irish Literature* (National Library of Ireland, Dublin, 1913), pp. 56 ff., should be consulted for other catalogues.

Page 14, notes 1 and 2. One of the most important collections of Ossianic poems, the early seventeenth-century *Duanaire Finn*, which is apparently known to Dr. Van Tieghem only through Stern's brief reference (*Ztsch. für vergl. Littgesch.*, N.S., VIII, 81), has been partly edited and translated by MacNeil in the volume referred to.

Page 15. Whatever sins literary and moral Macpherson may have to answer for, the common opinion (reflected by Dr. Van Tieghem) that the author of *Ossian* is solely responsible for confusing the Ulster with the Ossianic cycle needs modification. Characters and situations from the two cycles are occasionally found together in the same modern Irish folk-tale, and Miss Hull apparently has reason for believing that a similar condition existed in the Highlands and Western Isles during the eighteenth century (*A Text Book of Irish Literature*, I, 24). Cf. Stern, *Ztsch. für vergl. Littgesch.*, N.S., VIII, 80, 151. Later (p. 92) Dr. Van Tieghem puts the matter more accurately, but his statement based on p. 67 of Stern's work finds no justification in that place.

Misled by the hasty generalizations of others, Dr. Van Tieghem, following Campbell (of Tiree), characterizes the Finn of popular literature as "un nobleman et un gentleman dans la vieille et pure acception de ces mots." The fact is that the Finn of early tradition is far more genuinely epic than such a modern conception would imply. He is valorous, generous, and courteous, but he is also subtle, vindictive, "never wholly placable, and sometimes well-nigh treacherous" (MacNeil, *op. cit.*, p. xlxi). The Finn whom Dr. Van Tieghem compares to Arthur and Charlemagne is scarcely more like the Finn of the best Irish tradition than is Macpherson's.

Page 19. For *Oisin in Tir na n'Óg* read *Oisín i n-Tír na n-Óg*, or better still *Laoiadh Oisín air Thír na n-Óg*.

Page 20. In discussing the work of Jerome Stone, Dr. Van Tieghem has fallen into a number of errors which seem to have resulted from the misinterpretation of second-hand sources. According to Dr. Van Tieghem the brilliant young schoolmaster of Dunkeld "faisait l'éloge de la poésie gaélique dans le *Scots Magazine* du 15 novembre 1755." "Dans le même recueil," continues the author, "il publiait, en janvier 1756, la traduction d'un poème non ossianique, la *Mort de Fraoch*, et, en mai de la même année, celle d'un poème ossianique qu'il intitulait *Albin et Mey*." The truth is that Macpherson's eulogy was dated, not published, November 15, 1755. Embodied in a letter to the editor of the *Scots Magazine* and accompanied by an English version of a Gaelic ballad on the death of Fraoch, it was printed in 1756 on page 15 of the January number of the eighteenth volume of that journal. The English poem, which immediately follows the letter, is entitled *Albin and the Daughter of Mey: An old tale, translated from the Irish*. No poem headed *Albin and Mey* or the *Death of Fraoch* appeared in the *Scots Magazine* for May, 1756. The *Death of Fraoch* and the poem which Dr. Van Tieghem calls *Albin and Mey* are really one, the former being the correct designation of the original. Mey is the notorious Queen Medb, who figures prominently in the ancient Irish epic of the *Táin Bó Cúailnge*. In substituting an imaginary Albin for the original hero Fraoch, Stone appears to have anticipated Macpherson's practice of exchanging for more euphonious names the cacophonous Celtic appellations. The English is merely a free rendering into conventional eighteenth-century poetic phraseology of the well-known *Bás Fraoich*, a Gaelic ballad which had been traditional in Scotland for at least three centuries (cf. *The Dean of Lismore's Book* [Edinburgh, 1862], Gaelic Text, pp. 36, 37), and which recounts an episode in the *Táin Bó Fraoich*. The latter belongs to the Ulster, not the Ossianic, cycle, and on linguistic grounds may be regarded as "perhaps the most archaic of the longer sagas" of that group ([London] *Phil. Soc. Trans.* [1895-98], p. 79 and n. 2). Dr. Van Tieghem fails to note that the *Bás Fraoich* is only one of ten Gaelic ballads collected by the ill-fated scholar. The original of the translation in the *Scots Magazine* was extracted from Stone's papers and printed in the Appendix

to the famous *Report of the Committee of the Highland Society of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1805), pp. 99 ff., and the whole collection was published by the late Professor Donald Mackinnon in the *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*, XIV (1889), 314 ff. Another collection illustrating the interest in Gaelic poetry before the appearance of Macpherson's *Ossian* was made by John Farquharson about 1745, but the manuscript appears to have been used to kindle fires (see the mass of evidence collected by Sir John Sinclair in *The Poems of Ossian in the Original Gaelic* [Highland Society of London] [London, 1807], I, xl ff.).

Page 22. For *Balgowan* read *Balgowan*.

Page 67. The list of references to recent publications of Ossianic literature might have been greatly enlarged and improved had the author referred to Dottin's bibliographical outline of Celtic literature in the *Revue de synthèse historique*, III (1901) and VIII (1904) (the former of which is cited elsewhere [*Oss. en Fr.*, I, 11, n. 6] in another connection), and to R. I. Best's monumental *Bibliography*, already mentioned.

Pages 85-87. The validity of Dr. Van Tieghem's conclusion that the English text of Macpherson's *Ossian* is posterior to the composition of the Gaelic text of 1807 is open to the gravest suspicion. Cogent indeed must be the reasons advanced by him who would reverse the decision of Macbain (*Celtic Magazine*, XII [1887], 252) and Stern (*Ztsch. für vergl. Littgesch.*, N.S., VIII, 62), two of the most trustworthy authorities on Celtic matters, the former perhaps the most learned of recent students of Scottish Gaelic. The question of the relative priority of the two documents cannot, it is true, be answered immediately from the unassailable conclusions of Macbain and Stern that the Gaelic of 1807 is generally un-Celtic in vocabulary, in grammar, in idiom, in phraseology, and in meter. Their results taken as a whole prove no more than that the text (some parts of which are better Gaelic than others) was composed by some person or persons who, while generally thinking in English, were attempting to write Gaelic. Certain details of the evidence, however, point strongly toward the priority of the English. For example, the paucity of Gaelic turns of phrase in the English, combined with the constant appearance of English idioms and word-order in the Gaelic, creates a suspicion that the writer of the Gaelic had the English before him. Dr. Van Tieghem asserts that common opinion regards the 1807 text as "l'oeuvre des commissaires de la *Highland Society*," who, finding only scattered notes among Macpherson's posthumous papers, translated the English into Gaelic and presented the latter to the world as Macpherson's long-promised originals. As far as the present writer is aware, this is stating the case of the opposition far too simply. The evidence (too voluminous to be presented within the scope of this review) seems to point to the following as the solution most nearly in accord with the alleged conflicting evidence. Macpherson gathered from various sources summaries of stories and even scattered texts. Some

of the latter he discarded, either because of their difficulty or because they failed to square with his epic theories; others he used as suggestions for his English. Having written the English, he proceeded, alone or with the assistance of his helpers, to revise his "originals" and to piece out the Gaelic epic which he believed or affected to believe he was restoring. It appears that most of the Gaelic that now exists was "put together," to use Macpherson's phrase, during 1784 and the succeeding years by James, alone or with the help of his better-informed kinsman Lachlan, or some of his other assistants (Macbain, *Celtic Mag.*, XII, 252), but that, owing to Macpherson's political activities and loss of interest, the work was never completed. This highly probable theory of composite authorship accounts, at least in large part, for the fact that better Gaelic occurs in *Fingal* than in *Temora* (cf. *Celtic Mag.*, XII, 250). The presence in the Gaelic of passages not found in the English—a fact which seems to have impressed both Windisch and Dr. Van Tieghem—may mean no more than that the corresponding English was omitted by Macpherson in the final draft of his epics. Of the many bits of evidence tending to show the true state of the case, may be mentioned certain Gaelic passages printed as illustrations along with early editions of the English texts but appearing in entirely different form in the Gaelic of 1807 (cf. *Celtic Mag.*, XII, 252; *Ztsch. für vergl. Littgesch.*, N.S., VIII, 58 f.). The well-recognized fact that "la traduction anglaise littérale ne ressemble pas du tout à l'anglais de Macpherson" is hardly surprising when we consider the practical impossibility, at least for Macpherson and Company, of rendering into idiomatic Gaelic ballad meter the "drunken prose" of many parts of the English text. That in no case was any Gaelic "original" written before the corresponding English it would be useless to contend, but concerning a perhaps indeterminable but certainly extremely large proportion of Macpherson's *Ossian* Macbain's decision must stand: "The Gaelic . . . is a paraphrase of the English."¹

As regards the history of *Ossian* in France, Dr. Van Tieghem's labors would have been greatly lightened and the development of the *Ossian* myth could have been more clearly traced had the author had at his disposal an account of the relative contributions of genuine and spurious Celtic material to the stock in trade of Romanticism. The nature of the Romantic interest in the past can be perfectly understood only as the result of an estimate of the part played by error—an estimate which has been attempted for Norse tradition by Professor Farley in his *Scandinavian Influences in the English Romantic Movement* ([Harvard] *Studies and Notes in Philol. and Lit.*, IX [1903]).

The two earliest attempts in France to settle the *Ossianic* question by reference to authentic Celtic sources are highly illuminating for the development

¹ Stern's words are: "Die nähere Prüfung des Textes des gäischen 'Ossian' lässt nicht den geringsten Zweifel bestehen, dass er aus dem englischen Originale übersetzt ist."—*Ztsch. für vergl. Littgesch.*, N.S., VIII, 62.

of popular opinion regarding ancient Celtic literature. The adverse decision of "M. de C.," set forth in an elaborately documented and relatively scholarly *Mémoire*, prepared in 1764 at the request of the editors of the *Journal des Sçavans*, produced so little effect that a few years later the very publication in which it had appeared could state that "l'antiquité des poèmes d'Ossian paraît actuellement hors de doute." Disregarding the conclusions of "M. de C.," the public gladly accepted the type of scholarship represented by the physician Terence Brady in his letter published in the *Journal des Sçavans* for 1763.¹ Brady's communication, written to establish the authenticity of Macpherson's *Carthon*, is crammed with errors drawn from a well of ignorance which Dr. Van Tieghem appears not to have sounded. On the basis of a chance reference in the English translation of Keating's *History*, published in 1723, the Irishman invents an etymology for the title and imagines an Irish source for the content of Macpherson's version of the Father-and-Son Combat. Among the "many romantic fables" about Finn, Keating mentions the *Bruighean Chaorthainn* (Rowan-tree Palace). Struck by a fancied resemblance between the names *Carthon* and *Bruin-Chartuin* (an inaccurate phonetic rendering of the Irish title), Brady asserts that the Irish story is the source of Macpherson's account, implies that it belongs to a group of narratives "presqu'aussi anciens que les Héros qu'ils célèbrent," and in order to support his claim translates the title "Le Combat de Carthon."² The *Bruighean Chaorthainn* is a wild, rambling narrative, the plot of which has no similarity to *Carthon*. It was popular during the eighteenth century and, as Keating recognized, is a late romance of the decadent Middle Irish type.³ It is no wonder that, fed on such pabulum, the Ossianic myth thrrove, especially in an age when the learned reviewer of a "Dissertation . . . sur une nation des Celtes nommés Brigantes ou Brigants,"⁴ published in 1762, spoke of Celtic as a "langue inconnue," and, content to re-echo the opinion of his author, wrote: "On soupçonne que les anciens Livres Irlandois sont écrits en Celtique"(!)

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¹ The letter is printed on pp. 84 ff. of the July issue. Dr. Van Tieghem incorrectly refers to p. 426 of the June number. Cf. *Oss. en Fr.*, I, 163.

² Brady also informs his readers that the proper form of Finn's name is Finn OM Couel, which Dr. Van Tieghem further deforms into Fin O'Mac-Conel.

³ One of the earliest MSS, found in the Advocates' Library in Edinburgh, is said to date from the year 1603. Cf. Mackinnon, *Descriptive Cat. of Gaelic MSS* (Edinburgh, 1912), p. 14. Pádraic mac Piarsais, *Bruidhean Chaorthainn*, Balle Átha Cliath (1908), p. iii.

⁴ *Journal des Sçavans* (June, 1763), pp. 292, 295.

